

1067

A
METHOD
OF
Charity-Schools,

Recommended, for giving both a Religious
Education, and a way of Livelihood to the
Poor CHILDREN in

IRELAND.

With a Preparatory DISCOURSE, about the Practice
of CHARITY in ALMS-DEEDS.

By EDWARD NICHOLSON, M. A.
Author of the Conference between the Soul and the Body.

DUBLIN:

Printed by AARON RHAMES, at the Back of Dick's-
Coffee-House, in Skinner-Row, 1712.

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To the Most Reverend Father in God,

J O H N,

Lord A R C H-B I S H O P of

T U A M,

His G R A C E, One of the

L O R D S J U S T I C E S

O F

I R E L A N D.

May it please Your G R A C E,

TH E Intent of this following
Paper is, humbly to present
to our Nation, the Proposal
of a Thing easy to be done;
and yet of the highest Advantage for the
Happiness of our Country; and which,
through Your Grace's Auspicious Influ-

DEDICATION.

ence, and Encouragement to my poor Endeavours, is carry'd past Speculation, and proved very Feasible, by such a successful Beginning, even in the poorest Province, that of *Connaught*; where so many *Charity-Schools* are already, on a sudden, set up, and more daily expected; which we may well take to be a Blessing from Heaven, on the peculiar District of Your Grace's Archi-Episcopal Jurisdiction. This alone is enough to Entitle these few Pages to Your Grace's Patronage: But the Author has a much Elder Dependency on it, and thinks it both Honour and Reward enough, to be privileged to Subscribe himself

Your Grace's

Most Dutiful Chaplain, and

Most obliged Humble Servant,

EDWARD NICHOLSON.

A Preparatory

DISCOURSE

About the Practice of CHARITY in

ALMS-DEEDS.

BEFORE I can hope for any very good Success of what is here proposed, (tho' the evident Advantage, even to our Temporal Peace and Prosperity might alone sufficiently recommend it, to all that love the Publick) I think it necessary, in this Land, where all Things are forgotten (relating to Charity in *Alms-Deeds*) first to lay down some of the Principal Motives to such a Charity, without which we must, in a little time, be guilty of the inevitable Destruction of our Posterity.

This Subject might indeed afford just Matter for a Volumn; but I shall endeavour to be very Brief at present, to make way for the following Proposal of that sort of Charity, to the poor Children, which no other can Equal.

I. I shall shew, that Charity in *Alms-Deeds*, is the most Fundamental Duty of Christian Practice.

II. I shall consider the Extent of it, who are obliged to give, and how much they shou'd give.

III. I shall Answer some Objections that Covetousness and Folly have raised against it.

IV. I shall shew, that this Duty of *Alms-Deeds*, is the only way to know that we are in the Truth of Christianity.

i. I am to shew and prove, That Charity in *Alms-Deeds*, is the most Fundamental Duty of Christian Practice: And I need not be afraid to call it Fundamental, when the Scripture it self calls it a good Foundation against the time to come, 1 Tim. 6. 19. *Laying up in store for your selves a good Foundation against the time to come, which the Verse before calls, being rich in good Works, ready to Distribute, willing to Communicate (to them that are in Want) that they may lay hold on Eternal Life, says the 19th Verse. Lay hold*——as if there were no getting hold on't without this. Our Saviour makes it the Duty that cleanses all Creatures to us, Luke 11. 41. *Give Alms of such Things as you have, and behold all Things are clean unto you. And in Chap. 12. 33. Give Alms, provide yourselves Bags which wax not old, a Treasure in the Heavens that faileth not*

for where your Treasure is, there will your Hearts be also. His Doctrine was constantly for it, he took all Occasions to Press it, and he made his own Example confirm it. 'Tis plain, he made his Disciples keep a Bag for the Poor, and Judas, who knew his Humour, very officiously found Fault with the Woman that wasted the very costly Ointment on Jesus, *that it might have been sold for three hundred Pence, and given to the Poor*, John 12. 5. And Chap. 13. 28. tells, that when Jesus bade Judas, *that thou dost, do quickly*; no Man at the Table knew for what intent he spake this unto him: For some thought, because Judas had the Bag, *that Jesus had said unto him——that he shou'd give something to the Poor*, which proves it was his Custome to do so. And all his Disciples after him, most vehemently press the same Practice: St. Paul ties the very Justice of God to it, not to forget the Accepting, no more than God can be Unrighteous, Heb. 6. 10. *God is not Unrighteous to forget your Work and Labour of Love——In that you have Ministered to the Saints, and yet do Minister*, that is, to poor Christians, for all Christians were then call'd Saints. The Pious Dorcas, her chief and only Commendation given, is, *that she was full of good Works, and Alms-Deeds which she did*, Acts 9. 36. And the very end of the Commandment is Charity, says the Apostle, 1 Tim. 1. 5. *Now the end of the Commandment is Charity*.

And here I must speak something to the different Sences People put on Charity: Let them put what Sence they will upon it, it must come under one of these Two Things, either the Love of God, or the Love of our Neighbours: And the Scripture tells us plainly, we can never know the Love of God, even in our selves (much less in others) but by the loving our Neighbours. *No Man hath seen God at any time*, says St. John, *and if any Man says he loves God, and loveth not his Brother, he is a Liar. For he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, how can he Love God whom he hath not seen*, 1 John 4. 20. Now if we can never know the true Love of God in our selves, but by loving our Neighbours; and if he that loves his Neighbour most, loves God most, let any one consider who it is loves his Neighbours best, he that Relieves them, or he that does not? Charity, in short, is nothing else but the Love of God, and of our Neighbours for God's sake; and the former is known by the latter, and is compleated by it, the Love of our Neighbour essentially includes the Love of God, and infallibly perfects it. And the relieving our Neighbour's Wants (if done through the Love of God) is the surest, and most Essential part of our Love to them. You see then, what all Charity is at last in its truest Sense; 'tis nothing but loving God so well, as for his Sake, to do all the Good we can to others, that are his Children, created in his Image, our Neighbours, our Brethren, our Fellow-Christians. This is the true Charity, to do all the Good we can to others; and that may be exercised partly to their Souls, partly to their Reputations, partly to their Families, but to be sure exercising it to their Bodies when in want, is the clearest Proof, that we are Charitable in Earnest, for this is their pressingest present Want, and will put us to most Cost in Earnest, in the Expence of our Worldly Goods. This is to Practice our Love, *not in Word only, but in Deed, and in Truth*: And this is the true and principal Love of God, provided we neglect not our other Duties, for that will spoil all. Charity in its largest Sence, includes indeed our whole Duty as Christians; and if we do the very best of those Duties, and neglect the rest, we are guilty of all. And in this larger universal Acceptation of Charity, the Apostles Discourse of Charity may (if you will) be taken, 1 Cor. 13. Chap. that if we do any one, or two or three of the best Duties, and have not that Universal Charity, which regards our whole Duty in the weightier Matters of the Law, which our Saviour calls, Mercy, Justice, and Truth, *we are nothing, but as sounding Brass, or a tinkling Cymbal*. But indeed the Ancient Fathers, and Best Interpreters, do restrain Charity through all that 13th Chapter of the *Corinthians* only, to the true Intention of doing all the Good we can to others. And so that if we gave all our Goods to the Poor, and our Body to be burnt; and that our Intention in this, was not the Good of others, and the Good of the

the Church ; but some sinister Humour, or the pleasing of Men, or designing some Vain-Glory, it wou'd Profit us Nothing. The Apostle does not Insinuate, that ever such a Thing was done, or likely ever to be done, that a Man shou'd give all his Goods to the Poor, and his Body to be Burnt, without Charity. But only makes a Supposition, if that were possible. And if it be possible, yet the Apostle's Discourse here does not imply the Possibility of it, unless it also imply the Possibility, that a Man may have *the Gift of Prophecy, and understand all Mysteries, and all Knowledge, and have all Faith, so that he cou'd remove Mountains,* and yet have no Charity. This surely was never seen, neither as surely was the other ever seen, by any thing that can be proved from this Chapter, or from the whole Bible, that ever any one gave all their Goods to the Poor, and their Body to be Burnt, and yet had no Charity. But only the Apostle makes a Supposition, as I said before, that if this, and all other Things, cou'd be done without Charity, they wou'd Profit nothing, when they were not Charitably intended for the Good of others, or the Good of the Church ; which shews how highly God prizes the Intention of doing Good to others, and the actual Execution of that Intention, which is all that is meant by Charity in the proper Sense, as it is distinguished from other Graces, and not implying our whole Duty. And so 'tis the greatest of all other, and is so declared to be in the last Verse of that Chapter, *the greatest of these is Charity.* Nay, Charity is the very Livery of Christ : By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples (says Christ) if ye have Love one to another, John 15. 13. And St. Peter Charges us thus, *Above all Things have fervent Charity among your selves, for Charity covereth the multitude of Sins,* 1 Pet. 4. 8. And St. Paul calls it, the very Bond of Perfectness, *Above all these Things put on Charity, which is the Bond of Perfectness,* Colos. 3. 14. And St. James says, *What doth it profit my Brethren, tho' a Man say he hath Faith, and hath not Works, can Faith save him?* James 2. 14. Can Faith save him? Let them contrive to answer that Question, that believe it can. The next Words are, *If a Brother or a Sister be naked, and destitute of daily Food, and one of you say unto them, depart in Peace, be you warm'd and fill'd, notwithstanding ye give them not those Things that are needful to the Body, what doth it Profit? Even so Faith, if it have not Works, is dead,* says he, and what sort of Works it is that makes Faith a Living, or saving Faith, you see he tells you plainly, is *Alms-Deeds*, a giving those Things that are needful to the Body. And he repeats in the 20th Verse, *But wilt thou know, O vain Man, that Faith without Works, is dead :* And in the 24th Verse, *Ye see then how that by Works a Man is justified, and not by Faith only.* For says the 26th Verse, *As the Body without the Spirit is dead, so Faith without Works is dead also :* Where Faith is compared to the lifeless Body, and charitable Works to the Soul, that gives all the Life. And in the 1st Chapter, 27th Verse, he tells us, *Pure Religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the Fatherless and Widows in their Affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the World.* The expresse Works of Charity in *Alms-Deeds*, in the first Place named ; and then the other Parts of Purity, and goodness of Life. And St. Paul calls this fulfilling the Law of Christ, to bear one anothers Burthens, Galat. 6. 2. *Bear ye one anothers Burthens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ.* And this Charity to the Poor, has the peculiar name of *Righteousness* affix'd to it, as 2 Cor. 9. 9. *He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the Poor, his Righteousness endureth for ever :* And the same Name is given it, Dan. 4. 27. *Break off your Sins by Righteousness, your Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the Poor.* In short, there is no one Duty belonging to Mankind, has so much to be shewn for it, from the Word of God, as this has ; which I hope to Convince you further of, before I have done. And if there were no more than that one Place, or Passage which Christ tells us at large of, *Matth. 25. 31.* to the end of the Chapter, we must be convinced that Christ has made it the chief Rule and Standard of the future Judgment : *Come ye Blessed,* says Christ, *to those on the Right Hand, for ye fed me, ye cloathed me, ye visited me, for as much as ye did it to these, ye did it unto me :* And *go ye Cursed* (to those he had placed

placed on the Left Hand) *for ye fed me not, &c.* This is as much as Ten Thousand Precepts for that Heavenly Duty of Charity in *Alms-Deeds*: And this Mercifulness to the Indigent, being Fundamentally planted by our Creator, in the very Frame of Humane Nature, and is the Law of Nature it self, which Christianity came to improve in all Goodness; and the Gospel having so abundantly established this particular Duty, above all others: I hope I have sufficiently proved thereby, what I proposed in that first Consideration of my Four Heads offer'd. That is, first to shew that this Charity in *Alms-Deeds*, is the most Fundamental Duty of Christian Practice.

II. Secondly, I am to consider the Extent of this Duty of Charity in *Alms-Deeds*, and the Proportion Christianity requires. On this Head 'tis proper to Consider,

1. Who they are, that are obliged to Give.
2. How much they shou'd Give.

First, Who they are, that this Duty lays Obligation on to Perform it. I answer, all those that call themselves Christians, are especially, and above all Men, under the highest Obligation to it. Christ makes it the Badge, or Livery of his Disciples, *By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples*, says Christ, so that all Christians; whatsoever, are obliged to it, that see others in a much more extream Necessity than themselves: No Poverty of them, that have any way to Live, can excuse the total Neglect of this Duty, suppose they did the smallest Thing, but once in a Year, yet that very Something they must do. The poor Widow, which we Read of, *Mark 12. 42.* that cast in one Farthing, *two Mites, which makes a Farthing*, says the Text, and that was all (our Saviour tells us) that she had, *even all her Living*; yet he does not reprove her of any Fault, or Indiscretion, but commends her highly. And that Action had these five Reasons to approve it: First, She was sure she did not give it to any undeserving Vagabond, for she put it into the Corban of the Church, whence it was to be distributed to those that most needed, and most deserved it. Secondly, It was no more than wou'd buy her a small piece of Bread, and she depended upon God for her daily Bread, he that fed the Ravens, wou'd not let a Widow Starve: This was an Act of the highest Faith. Thirdly, This was a necessary Testimony of once signaling her Obedience to that principal Branch of God's Law, the Law of *Alms-Giving*. Fourthly, Who knows but this was the likeliest way to bring her back that same again with Encrease, for she might be chosen to be one of those to distribute the *Church-Alms* to; and if that did not happen, God she knew was able many ways to Reprise her: It is but Seed sown. Fifthly, She did thereby take Place of the richest Offerers at that time, and was deservedly placed above them all by Christ. And indeed, this is a mighty Advantage we have, that the Poorer we are, the more likely we shall be to out-strip the Charity of the Rich, if our little Offerings bear but any Proportion to our Abilities, and to that Love of God, that fervent Charity, which shou'd dwell in our Hearts towards those that are Christ's Brethren, and our own. And now, if this be a Duty incumbent on all, how much more on the Rich; to them it is the highest Charge enjoyn'd them: *Charge those that are Rich in this World* (says St. Paul) *that they may be ready to Give, and glad to Distribute.* And 'tis the concluding Charge of all that first Epistle to Timothy. But if Men be allow'd to pay their Charity only out of what they count the Superfluity of their Wealth, we shall then find but very few that will think themselves Rich enough, and perhaps none at all that will be Charitable enough: But as Sacrifice under the Law was necessary to all Men, and he who was not able to bring an Offering from the Flock, might bring but

Two young Pigeons; and from him who was not able to do that, a *handful of Meal* might be accepted, *Levit. 5. 11.* so from every Christian something of what can possibly be spared, is due as an Acknowledgment to him, from whose Bounty we have received all that we Possess. The poorest Freeholder must pay King's Rent according to his Acres: Or if it run too long in Arrears, the King will seize the Whole at last. And so does the King of Heaven often, to those that never pay him his Chiefry. Some part must be consecrated as an Homage to God, from whom we have received the Whole, that is, must be given to the Poor in his stead, as to those he has appointed for his Proxies to receive it, and to whom he has assign'd no other Portion upon Earth: *Let every one of you* (says the Apostle) *lay by him in store* (for the Collection) *on the first Day of the Week, according as God hath prosper'd him, 1 Cor. 16. 2.* He says not, let the Rich only, but without Exception, *Let every one of you lay by him,* according as God hath prosper'd you: Many Hands, tho' each Contribute but little, are a greater help, than larger Doles given from a few: And that little it self, which a poor Man gives, will profit his Soul, more than much greater Oblations will, to a rich Man, for God reckons not the Greatness of the Gift, by the Quantity thereof, but by the Ability of the Giver.

Now, that some such Offerings shou'd constantly be paid to God, as an Acknowledgment of our Dependency and Subjection to him, is an Act of Natural Worship it self; and will I hope, by its high reasonableness, approve it self to the Conscience of any considerate Christian, to be a Duty and Debt, to which we are so necessarily and strictly obliged, that the neglect, or detaining of it, will in any Christian be not only an Injustice, but in some sort a meer Sacrilege, a robbing God of his Due, as well as with-holding the Livelihood of the Poor.

But we find most People are apt to excuse themselves: I cannot do it, says one; I cannot afford to do it, says another: Why cannot they? What is it hinders? Why, when it comes to the Test, 'tis mostly the Pumps and Vanities of this wicked World: The very Thing which they renounced in their Baptismal Vow, and which they now call Decency. But sure 'tis very undecent in a Christian, to enlarge his Shew, out of the very Life and Blood of the Poor, to whom God has given no other Livelihood upon Earth, but what Relief is owing to them, from the bounden Debt of that Charity, which they that God has given some Livelihood to, ought to pay. And what else can it be but Sacrilege, for any one to rob Charity, to make their own Figure the greater. Decency we allow is commendable in the World, but there shou'd be as many different Degrees of that, as there are of different Fortunes in the World: And in short, the true Rule of Christian Decency is this, that we shou'd be both Just and Charitable in the first place, and wrong neither our Creditors, our Servants, our Labourers, nor our Poor: We can't be Honest without paying our Debts to our Power; and this to God and the Poor, is our first and chief Debt, and must be paid before all other, and is the easiest to pay, being the smallest. And when we have paid our Tithes and Charity Debts to God, as well as contented all our other Creditors, then we may provide for our Families, and make as big a Figure, with the rest, as we can: Especially, if our Fortune be enough already, or that we itch more to be Gazing-Stocks, than to encrease our Fortune, to do more Good with it, and provide better for our Posterity. A Man may, without Sin, do what he will with his Own, in all lawful Ways; provided he first pay all others their Due, and among the rest, God and the Poor first of all. But it is certain, he that having but Forty Pounds a Year, will not pay God his Proportion of that, would not pay him proportionably if he had Four Hundred Pound a Year; for that would then be Ten-fold more to pay, than what he refuses to pay now, and so wou'd go ten Degrees nearer his Heart to part with it. But some make Excuse that they are in Debt, and so cannot do this Duty; and yet they can live High and Pompous the while perhaps. Can't every one run in Debt as well as they, and so think to be privileged from this Debt, which

as being God's due, is the first of all Debts: But robbing God of the Pensions of the Poor, is the likeliest way for them never to be out of Debt, or else to be utterly blasted at last with all their Acquisitions. 'Tis therefore a most undispenfible Duty upon every Christian, without Exception, to pay some Proportion to the very Poor and Needy, out of whatever God has bestowed on him, without Pleading that he cannot. And if this be fuch an absolute Fealty, or Debt, even on the loweft Rank of People that have any Subfiftance, or Income, how much more will it be expected from thofe that are Richer, or better to Pafs in this World, I leave to their own Confcienccs to Infer; by minding them but of that one Paffage of the future Verdict of Chrift at the Day of Judgment, *Matth. 25.* and let them Impartially confider what manner of Proceedings they are there warn'd to expect: *Come ye Blessed, and go ye Cursed, &c.* which furely, if their *Mammon* has not perfuaded them to flop their Ears unto all Charms, will prevail with their Hearts to confefs, that as it is the Duty of God's Minifters to deliver, fo it is theirs to receive that Charge which *St. Paul* entrusted to *Timothy*, *1 Tim. 6. 17.* which I have once already mention'd in Part, that we charge them that are Rich, not to trust in uncertain Riches, but in the Living God; and therefore that they do Good, that they be Rich in good Works——That they may lay hold on Eternal Life. Make you Friends (fays Chrift) of the Mammon of Unrighteoufnefs, that when ye fail, they may receive you into Everlafting Habitations, *Luke 16. 9.*

2. Now I come to the fecond Confideration on this Head, of the Extent of the Duty of Charity in *Alms-Deeds*, that is, how much we fhould Give, or what Proportion we fhould obferve in Giving: For this there can be no unalterable definitive Rules given, whereby every one may know precisely the exact Quantity which this Duty obliges them to: For the Condition of the Occafions is fo uncertain, and fubject to fuch various Emergencies, and the Performers are of fuch innumeraibly different Fortunes and Abilities, and the Circumftances fo Multiplicit, that no particular Rules can exactly limit our *Alms*. 'Tis therefore left, among Chriftians (that every one may fix his own Proportion) 'tis left, I fay, to the Conduct of a Pious Prudence, whereby God and the Poor wou'd be fure to be no Loofers, among them whom the true Spirit of Chrift governs: Or if Men wou'd but hearken to that common Plea within their own Hearts and Natures, that Rule of right Reason, which even a Heathen Emperor caufed to be Engraven in the Walls of his Palace, *Quod tibi fieri non vis, alteri ne feceris*, or rather as our Saviour exprefs'd it, *Whatfoever ye wou'd that Men fhould do unto you, even fo do ye unto them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.* If Men, I fay, wou'd but follow this Rule of Chrift's, which is even a Rule of Natural Juftice; then, as none of them wou'd defire, or reasonably expect, in their Neceffity to be unmercifully Dealt with, by any good Man; fo certainly the leaft they cou'd do, to avoid the loud Reproaches of their own Confcienccs, muft be to deal as Charitably with him that truly wants this Help, and Implores it, as they wou'd expect Good Men ought to do with them, if fuch Men were in their own Condition, and they themfelves in fuch Neceffity. This is a moft high Argument our Saviour gives for it, that is the chief defign of the Law and the Prophets: *For this is the Law and the Prophets*, fays he, *Matth. 7. 12.* yet indeed if we took our Ground but from much lower Confiderations, from fuch as Humanity it felf wou'd Suggest, and ordinary Prudence allow of, it wou'd certainly give Charity a far more liberal Entertainment, than this frozen Age does admit of; this cold and frozen Age, I fay, which feems to have clos'd Men's Hands, and harden'd their Hearts, beyond the Power of Chriftianity it felf to difsolve, beyond the Warmth and Influence of that Heavenly Spirit, which the abounding of Iniquity has almoft banifhed from Earth again: *For becaufe Iniquity has abounded, the Love of many (as our bleffed Saviour foretold) is grown Cold.* The remarkablenefs of which Decay, and coldnefs of Charity, prompted that Obfervation from a good Man, that *as the World was once drown'd to quench the Flames of Luft, fo it fhall again be burnt, to heat the coldnefs of Charity.*

But

But now for the understanding some Measure and Proportion of that Duty of *Alms* which our Religion binds us to; 'twill be necessary to consider, that tho' amongst Christians, the Duty has been left to the guidance of that Spirit of Love, wherewith Christ had inspired the World, and which was in no danger to be lost, whilst the Power of Christianity continued with Men; yet to the *Jews*, that hard-hearted People, who God knew wou'd be so Covetous of Earthly Things, and so Prone to the Lucre of this World, that they wou'd never sufficiently discharge that reasonable Competency, which Piety, and the Needs of the Poor required, if they were left to their own Benevolence: To them therefore God gave a particular Precept for the very *μέτρον*, or quantity of their *Alms*, the least which shou'd be accepted from them, and which every one was bound to perform, under Penalty of Disobedience to the Law of *Moses*: So much was but their Debt, and Duty; and those who were counted very Charitable among them, it was from their own voluntary Oblations over and above, from their Deeds of free Piety besides: And this particular Quantity which they were obliged to, you shall find mention'd in *Dent. 14. 28.* *At the end of three Years, thou shalt bring forth all the Tithe of thine Increase the same Year, and shall lay it up within thy Gates, that the Levite, the Stranger, the Fatherless, and the Widow may come and eat, and be satisfied, that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the Work of thine Hand which thou doest.* Where the Levite being named, and the Stranger being added to it, shews it means a Stranger Levite, or any Levite, who might happen to be in more than ordinary Want: For it is certain, that this third Years Tithing, was not the Tithing which was due to the Levites as their Maintenance, for that was an every Years Tithing; as in the 22d Verse of that same Chapter 14th, *Thou shalt truly Tithe all the Increase that thy Field bringeth forth Year by Year: And of this it is said, Numb. 18. 24. The Tithes of the Children of Israel, I have given to the Levites to inherit:* But this Tithing for the Poor was to be done over and above, once every third Year, which is clearly express'd again in the 26th of *Dent. 12. When thou hast made an end of Tithing all the Tithes of thine Increase the third Year, which is the Year of Tithing (for the Poor, that is to say) and hast given it to the Levite, the Stranger, the Fatherless, and the Widow—Then thou shalt say before the Lord thy God, I have brought away the hallowed Things out of my House, I have not taken away ought thereof, but have done according as thou hast commanded me:* Then follows the Prayer which they might use, with a just Title to all the Blessings which the Earth cou'd contain, Verse 15. *Look down from thy Holy Habitation, from Heaven, and bless thy People Israel.* This sort of Tithing is spoken of by the Jewish Writers too, and is called by *Josephus, decimatio pauperis*, the Tithing for the Poor.

Now a whole Tithe every third Year, is just the same with a third Part of a Tithe every Year, that is, a thirtieth Part; and this was the standing Proportion, which by the Precept of their Law was allotted to the Poor, out of every Man's whole Increase. And this is not so much neither, as might have been expected from a less Worldly-minded People, but was suited to the Proportion which a Hard-hearted Nation wou'd allow of: It amounts but to Eight Pence per Pound of our Coin. Yet it is to be feared there are many among Christians themselves now-a-days, and those, such as possess no small quantity of the Creature too; who, if they were told but of the Jewish Proportion of *Alms*, as the least which Christian Zeal cou'd possibly oblige them to; it wou'd doubtless be enough to make them cry louder than ever, *Babylon and Egypt, Idolatry and Superstition, Popery and Antichristianism;* Words which they cannot forbear throwing at all Things they dislike: And if they had Success wherever they were flung, wou'd have long ago knock'd down all Bondage to the Law, as they call it, that is, to all Laws both Divine and Humane, and have left nothing but *Free Promiser*, and *Christian Liberty*, as they Phrase it; which wou'd too apparently turn to such a Liberey as the *Psalmist* speaks of, *to do even what they List.* But unless we wou'd have only the Name of Charity left in the World, and the Life or Fruits,

Fruits, that is, the actual Works thereof, *Abolished*, with the *Ceremonial Law*, we must confess that the Proportion God required of *Jews*, ought not to be less rated upon Christians, whose very Livery shou'd be *Charity*, and their Badge to be known of all Men by. Nay, and the plain Warning we are given by Christ, is this (with a solemn Assurance) *I say unto you, that except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no Case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. 5. 20. where, if *Righteousness* be taken but in the common general Sence, for *Piety* or *good Life*; it is certain, the Works of *Charity* and *Benevolence*, must be a principal Part thereof. But it is most peculiarly remarkable for this Purpose in Hand, that the Word *δικαιοσύνη*, there render'd *Righteousness*, is all one with *ἐλεημοσύνη*, *Alms*, and they are sometimes in Scripture promiscuously used the one for the other, and so in 2 Cor. 9. 10. *The Fruit of Righteousness*, there mention'd, appears plainly by the Context, to signify the Reward of their *Alms-Giving*: As it is in the Verse before, *He hath dispersed Abroad, he hath given to the Poor, his Righteousness endureth for ever*: And in Matth. 6. 1. *Take heed that ye do not your Alms to be seen of Men*: *Alms* is there noted by *Stephanus*, in his *Diversæ Lectiones*, to be read in some Copies *δικαιοσύνη*, the same Word, which is here render'd *Righteousness*, which we are so positively commanded, must in us exceed the *Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees*, on pain of Exclusion from Heaven: And the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* were the most Zealous in paying their Legal Dues, surely therefore if we resolve to be Followers of *Jesus*, and Obedient to his Gospel, which obliges us to make our *Charity* exceed the *Charity of the Jews*, we must needs then perform, to more purpose, than the generality of Christians are observ'd to do, that Duty of *Love*, which is the fulfilling of the Christian Law: For nothing is more visibly neglected by most People, even by many amongst us, who otherwise seem very Studious of Godliness, and wou'd take it ill not to be counted *Vessels of Grace*. But it is especially remarkable, that the greatest Pretenders to Purity among us, even the Christian *Pharisees* of these Times, the *Quakers*, *Anabaptists*, &c. who proudly Separate from us their Brethren, as counting us *Publicans and Sinners*, and therefore keep their Distance, and Pray by themselves: 'Tis plainly evident, I say, that these *Pharisees* are as Reproveable, and Notorious, for the Neglect and Non-performance of *Charity*, as the other *Pharisees* of our Saviour's Time were for their over-prizing it in themselves, after they had done it. But let us not so learn Christ, so as to make his whole Religion but an Art of excusing our Selves from the indispensable Obligation of his Doctrine; which is the vainest Philosophy in the World, the most impudent Sophistry imaginable; to evacuate the Force of Christ's Precepts, by perpetually insisting on nothing but the freeness of his Promises; to destroy the Necessity of Working by pleading the Privilege of Believing; as if believing Christ, wou'd excuse us for not Obeying him. No, let us be assured the Gospel was planted among us for no other End, but to produce such real Fruits in our Lives, as the World wou'd not admit of before. And therefore, whosoever now will yet harden themselves in this *Day of Grace*, and persevere still in a barren Zeal, an unfruitful and unprofitable *Mammonist*; let such know that Christ was he, who by his Doctrine, has laid the Ax to the Root of the Tree, and now every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit, is hewn down and cast into the Fire, Matth. 3. 10.

But now the Reason why Christians are left without such certain, prescrib'd, Quantities to their *Charity*, may well be supposed to be this; that if a certain quantity of *Alms* were prefix'd, in so high a Degree as were fitting for us, and that by express precept Obligatory to all Christians; it wou'd, on the one side, harden the Hearts of too many, by preventing those that too much loved their Wealth, from embracing the Christian Faith; and on the other side, it wou'd have slacken'd the Zeal of many others, better disposed, by Suggesting that they had done sufficiently in fulfilling the Precept: Whereas, if it had been left to their own free Benevolence, they wou'd perhaps have done much more.

But

But yet the setting before our Selves the *Jewish Rule* now, will shew how Shameful it were, for us, to come behind them; and that it must be very Blameable, very Undecent, and Mis-becoming the Religion we Profess, to use less Proportions than were rated on a Hard-hearted People, and to make the Revenue of the Poor, [which is the Treasury of God, more scanted, because it is now left to the more powerful Influence of our own filial Duty and Gratitude.

Now, because I expect this Discourse will be thought strange by some, for my proposing the *Jewish Proportion of Alms*, I must declare that I am not singular herein; but do follow the most Pious, the most Learn'd, and the most Excellent Authors. I need not trouble you with quoting their Books, but I shall (of this last Age) name one for all, and he a Divine of our own, and one of the most Judicious, Excellent, and Pious our Church was ever Bless'd with—the most Learn'd Dr. *Hammond*, who has writ a whole Discourse for that Purpose, being a Book bound by it self, call'd, *The Poor Man's Tithing*, grounded on that Place I have quoted about the third Year's Tithing, *Deut. 14. 28*. I own he was the first that led me into it, above Forty Years ago, in which I have been confirm'd by many other Authorities since: So that it cannot be call'd one Doctor's Opinion, as the way of the World is, for every Thing they dislike. And this of my present Doctrine (which yet is not mine, but God's and the Scriptures) I am sure will not be well liked by such, as think all they have already, too little to supply their own Wants. But I would fain mind them, how few there are in the World that think otherwise, be they never so Rich. All People (as they may pretend) are in great want of something or other, either of rich Attire, or costly Furniture, or Plate for their Use, or stately Houses, or something else of Figure, which they wou'd be at, more than they have. And thus People do still so enlarge their Desires, by making artificial new Needs, that the more they have, the more they want: For it is certain, all Want is terminated in our Desires, and he that desires most, wants most. Therefore let not any one, of the meanest Rank, whom God has bless'd with any Subsistence, think that he can be excused from his Proportion of *Alms*, on any Pretence of Want; since that may be pretended by all; and indeed the Wants or Desires of poorer People are perhaps much less, and about more easy Attainments than those which Torment their richer Neighbours. But if we will forbear to discharge that Debt of Charity, in its due Proportion, till all those Needs of our own be supplied, which our Ambition, or Pride, or Voluptuousness, or Covetousness will create for us, we shall be sure, then, never to Perform it at all: For the World has arrived at such a pitch of Pride and Vanity, that it is accounted Ignominious, not to be Prodigal beyond measure in vain Expences, and he shall pass with most for a Miser, that Lives not at such a Rate, as to keep himself in perpetual Debt. But let us have a care of the sad Reckoning of those who come short of *Scribes and Pharisees*; and who, to further their own Extravagance, maintain it partly out of the very Life and Blood of the Poor: For a poor Man's Bread is his Life, and he that with-holds that little Debt he owes the Poor, towards the Support of their Life, what does he but *keep the Spoil of the Poor in his Hands*? Nay, robs them of their Blood, of that Food which is necessary to the Sustenance of their Life; call'd in Scripture, *breaking the Poor to pieces, and grinding the Face of the Poor*, *Isaiah 3. 15*. And that all this shou'd be done, only to bestow it upon our Selves, in some useless Superfluities, which we are never the better for, and which surely we shou'd hinder from encroaching on the Right of the Poor. For certainly the needless Excess of most People, beyond their Ability, in soothing their Vain-glorious and Luxurious Humours, is the great hindrance to the discharge both of this Debt, and of many others, no less Unconscionably detain'd.

Upon the whole, for Direction in this Point, both to the Richer and to the Poorer, for how much they shou'd Give, it is sum'd up in one of the Sentences order'd by our Church, to be read before the Offertory; *Be merciful after thy Power, if thou hast much,*

give plenteously ; if thou hast little, do thy Diligence gladly to give of that little, for so gatherest thou thy self a good Reward in the Day of Necessity.

III. I am now to Answer some Cavils and Objections, which Covetousness and Folly has raised against the Necessity of this Christian Duty, in the Practice of *Alms-Deeds*.

1. The first Objection I shall Consider, is, That this wou'd be Prejudicial to the Common-wealth, that it wou'd encourage Idleness, whereas spending that Money in heightning our Figure, wou'd keep up Trades-men.

I Answer, 'Tis not Idlers our *Alms* shou'd Support, St. Paul's Rule is, *2 Thes. 3. 10. They that wou'd not Work, neither let them Eat.* But the poorer Sort of Trades-men, that are Poor indeed, might be greatly relieved by the just Methods of Charity, if the richer Ones wou'd give their own Charity also, and God wou'd Bless their Trade the more. But must Sin be made Lawful, to encourage Trading? This is the old Sinner's Plea: It will make as good for Drunkards, Gluttons, and Spend-thrifts, that their Vice encourages the Trading of Taverns, Inns, and Publick-Houses. But if the Common-wealth be so much in these Objector's Thoughts, pray let them Consider, whether any Thing can be greater Benefit to a Common-wealth, than the just, due and sufficient Practice of *Alms-Deeds*, if thorowly complied with by a Nation; both by bringing the Blessing of God on them, and also naturally preventing the greatest Mischief of a Nation; which is to swarm with Multitudes of Indigent People; which consequently encreases Thieves, Robbers, Malefactors, and Desperades; who are ready to Fish in troubled Waters: And therefore wou'd Contribute all they can, to bring about Confusion, Rebellion and Mischief, when their desperate Necessities can have no hopes of such a small Relief, as wou'd keep Life in them, and Strengthen them to Work for more. Pray let us consider but the *Jewish* Proportion of *Alms* it self, a thirtieth Part; and let that be rated, for Example, on the County of *Sligo*; I will undertake the exactest Computer will find it to make at least Eight Hundred Pounds *per Ann.* and perhaps half as much more. Now Eight Hundred Pound wou'd Maintain Two Hundred poor Families, allowing each of them Four Pound a-piece *per Ann.* And there are not perhaps above so many poor Families in this County that need it. And so if you reckon proportionably through all *Ireland*, how many Thousand Families wou'd this Enable to bring up their Children in the Fear of God, who for want of that much, are forced to leave them Untaught, and so, for the most part, turn Thieves, Vagabonds or Wicked: Besides, how many Families might this bring over to the Truth of our Religion, when they see your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven. And many of them, too, that are in Want, when they see our Church such a Sanctuary for the Distressed, wou'd be tempted to examine and hearken to the Truth. Now what can our Common-wealth Objectors say against all this? But I have a further Argument, that I am sure they can say less against; that is, can any Common-wealth be Happy without God's Blessing? and if any Obligation from God can be sufficient to make a Nation depend upon his Promise for any Blessing, what he has said in this Case is most Express, *Malachy 3. 10. Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord, if I will not open you the Windows of Heaven, and pour you out a Blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.* This is promised upon our paying God all his Dues, *Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord.* But says the Verse before it, *Mal. 3. 9. But ye are cursed with a Curse, for ye have robbed me, even this whole Nation.* The Lord avert that Curse from our Nation: For I fear we have too much deserv'd it. Our Neighbour Nation of *England*, have always been more Charitable than we: And God kept them in Peace at Home, whilst we were despised, and given up to our Enemies, at least to be robb'd and plunder'd. And we

were

were stigmatized in *England*, by the Name of the proud *Irish*; when we shall earn the Name of the *Charitable Irish* God only knows. The Judgments we were then given up to, we may well take to have been one of the Effects of that Curse, *Mal. 3. 9.* This for the first Objection about the Common-wealth.

2. The second Objection I shall Consider, is, That this Practice, if done in such Proportion, cannot be Secret, and so it will be Vain-glorious.

This Objection you must know comes from a sort of People, who wou'd have all Secret, that it might not be known how little they do themselves, and so they are very fond of that Expression of our Saviour's, *Let not your left Hand know what your right Hand doth.* But I answer, that was only spoken as to the Rotten-hearted *Pharisees*, who loved the Praise of Men more than the Praise of God; and strove to make that Publick which needed not; for something shou'd be done Private. Not that it is dangerous to be known, when the being known may do any good, or when it is not eagerly affected to have it known for any ill vain-glorious Design. Must not we Pray: where we are known to Pray (as in Publick) for fear of being counted Vain-glorious? O yes, you may Pray; this they do not speak against, because it will cost nothing to your Purse. But if a Man pray never so Private, so that his Ears do not know what his Lips do, he may be discover'd for all that, through a Key-hole, or a Chink, when his Door is shut; and so he may in his privatest *Alms* also, tho' his left Hand do not tell what his right Hand doth; which is only a figurative Speech of our Saviour's, for such a Privacy sometimes to be endeavour'd, and an unaffectedness of Ostentation; not that it is possible, strictly speaking, that the left Hand cou'd not know what the right Hand does, if it cou'd know any thing; any more than that the Ears shou'd not know what the Lips do. But the meaning in both is, that we shou'd not call our privatest Friends to Witness, and Publish all that we do of that Kind, as the *Pharisees* call'd with a Trumpet, the whole Town about them; but yet a near Relation, a Wife, a Child or a Servant, may see or find out, and Blab it, when we least desire it. And where's the dangerousness of all that? Nay, if we escaped that, the Poor themselves, that are Relieved, will Publish it perhaps, and how can we help it? Our Saviour himself, when he did charitable Deeds, in healing bodily Infirmities, tho' he did most in Publick, yet he had a mind sometimes to have some of his good Deeds private, as we are told, *Mark 7. 36.* *And he charg'd them* (when he had done the Cure there spoken of) *that they shou'd tell no Man; but the more he charged them* (says the Evangelist) *so much the more a great deal they published it.* But, I suppose, the Objectors are safe from the danger of the Poor's publishing their private Charity to them, tho' our Saviour cou'd not escape it. And why are they so safe? Truly, because the Poor have no Tale of that Kind to tell of them. But pray where's the danger of any Vain-glory at all, by any signal Practice of Charity in this Age? There is indeed no Glory to be got by that in this age. The generality of the Spectators are now far different from those of our Saviour's Time, who universally prized and praised such Works. But now what the *Psalmist* prophesied is true, *Psalms 49. 18.* *Whilst thou dost good to thy self, Men will speak well of thee, and will Praise thee.* Self-love is the only Praise-worthy Thing now: Figure, Pomp, and Grandure, bring Admiration; and 'tis the chief Thank-worthy Matter now, that People can Eat and Drink well, and wear as good as any in the Country. He is a Fool, then, that wou'd throw away a large Quantity of his Substance, Five Hundred Pounds perhaps, if he Lives long, and gave but Ten Pound a Year; or a Thousand Pound, if he gave Twenty Pound a Year: And that only to purchase some few People's Good-morrow, along with many more People's Envy, Obloquy, Detraction, and Contempt. This is like Bribing a Man with a Hundred Pound, to Swear One Pound into his Pocket. All the Reward a Man may expect for much Charity, from the Tongues of those that

do it not, is to be charged with Hypocrisy; whereas, alas! they that neglect the true Practice of Charity, in the Works of *Alms-Deeds*, are the chief Hypocrites in earnest. For really 'tis better to do the *Pharisees* Alms, if any be so Wicked and Senseless now, as to do so; better that, I say, than less or none at all: They that do it so wrong, shall be punished its true, but not so much as they that do little or none at all: For the vainest giver of *Alms* does some good to the Receivers, but to give little or none at all, will not suffer the Poor to Live. Behold (says *Zacheus* to our Saviour) *Behold, Lord, the one half of my Goods I give to the Poor*: The one half! A great Hypocrite he wou'd be counted in this Age, and full of Vain-glory, if he said so, of the half quarter of his Goods. What Worldly Glory then can any one expect for that Practice now, which will rather bring him under the Persecution of envious Tongues, and raise him more Enemies than Friends. And so I have done with the second cavilling Objection about Vain-glory.

3. The third Objection I shall Consider, is, What the *Solifdians* and *Fiduciaries* do Object——that this is a buying Heaven with our Works; and so 'tis our Money must purchase Heaven.

This Objection, you must know, proceeds from the excessive Love of Money, which the Scripture tells us, is the Root of all Evil, *1 Tim. 6. 10. For the Love of Money is the Root of all Evil; which while some coveted after, they have Err'd from the Faith.* But this buying of Heaven is a strange Cavil, and may as well be retorted on the Objectors; do not they hold their solitary Faith to be as necessary for Heaven, as we hold our good Works, and is not their Case then in as much danger of buying Heaven, as ours? No you may say, for it costs them nothing. I wou'd allow that to be the best Husbandry indeed, if there were not one sore Text against it, among many others, *Galat. 6. 7. Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for what a Man soweth, that shall he reap.* But is not our Faith as much our own, as our Works? 'Tis God that gives both, and both to will, and to do, and we give him but of his own in either: Well then, if it must be called buying Heaven on one side by his Works, it may as well be call'd buying Heaven on t'other side by his Faith: For Believing, and Working, are the one as much our own Act, as the other. But out upon this Foolery! Can we get any Treasure, that is a valuable Consideration, for Heaven? Money can never deserve it; but a working Faith surely deserves it as well, or better than a solitary Faith; yet, neither of them deserves it. Heaven is an infinite glorious Reward indeed, that God in his free Mercy, Grace, Goodness, and Love has promised (and he is Faithful that hath promised) to all those that Love and Obey him, *that keep his Commandments*, says St. John, and do those Things that are well pleasing in his Sight, *1 John 3. 22. to do those Things that are Pleasing in his Sight, is true Faith in Christ; this is true Trust in him, without this no other definition of Faith whatsoever, no Fiducial Reliance, no calling Christ Lord, Lord, without doing the Things which he says, like those that profess they know God, but in Works do deny him; no Faith of assurance, or adherence, rolling, or leaning upon Christ, without thus Obeying him, no strength of Confidence, nor charm of Imagination, shall avail us hereafter. Can any thing else, but the actual obeying Christ in good Works, make us sure of his Favour? No, not all the Art, Knowledge, Mysteries, Logick, Philosophy, Theology, nor Speculations in the World can do it, without this of Practical Works; and the poorest Christian, by Godly Practice of Virtue in good Works, shall go into the Kingdom of Heaven, before all the Learn'd Masters of Theory in the World, without them: The Learn'd Lawyer that ask'd our Saviour, *Master what shall I do to inherit Eternal Life?* Christ did not teach him any abstruse System of some modern Sort of Chymical Theology, but in short directed him to the Works of Charity, by the Story of a Samaritan's Charity to a wounded Stranger; and concludes with a——Go thou and do likewise,*

likewise, Luke 10. 37. we shou'd beware of vain Philosophy, as the Apostle charges us, and not distract our Selves with speculative Notions, which we cannot understand, as the fatal necessity of Events, *Hobbs* his beloved Doctrine, and many other logical Banterers, which we can never either make plain to others, or our selves; but after all our pretended Discovery and Light, remaining perhaps Children of Darkness still, if instead of following good Works, as the *Unum Necessarium*, we follow every *ignis fatuus*, or false Light, of the counterfeit Angel of Light.

This has nothing to do with the plain Religion of Christ: so plain, that *the way-faring Man shall not Err therein* (says the Scripture.) Christ's Religion is chiefly a practical Religion: nor shou'd we insist upon any thing, for the Truth of God, or for the Gospel of Christ, but what has a direct, necessary, and plain Influence upon Practice; especially any Doctrine that wou'd in the least take our Eyes off our Work, or any wise obstruct Practice: we must beware of that, as of the Doctrines of seducing Spirits; which when set on Foot, you may be sure will be pretended to be the greatest Piety and Orthodoxness. But this one Mark will discover them, if in common Sense, and in most People's plain natural Reason, they invalidate the absolute necessity of good Works, then 'tis time to suspect that the Father of Lies has privately his Hand in the Business. Thus I have done with the third Objection, about that Cavil of buying Heaven.

4. The fourth Objection I shall Consider, is, That Charity should be chiefly Conversant about the Souls of People, and if we have a charitable good Will towards their Souls, we need not concern our selves much for their Bodies. But I answer, Christ has redeemed both Body and Soul: therefore both are to be regarded by us. I own, true Charity to Souls is in the highest commendable; but it shou'd put us to some Cost—— as in getting them Schooling, and Instruction. And therefore providing and maintaining Free-Schools, buying for the poorest Sort Books of Instruction, Books of Devotion, Catechetical Books, Bibles, Testaments and Common-Prayer-Books are great acts of Charity. 'Twou'd better become the abler Sort to give thus to the Poorer, than the one half of their vainer Expences does. Feeding of Souls no doubt is the highest Charity. But when the Body is in want, that is the most pressing, and 't'other will less take with them then. Our Saviour lays the Inquisition at the Day of Judgment, upon feeding the Bodies, *feeding the Hungry, cloathing the Naked, relieving the Sick.* They that thus help their Bodies, do certainly love their Souls best. So I have done in short with that cavilling Evasion, of substituting a cheaper Device of Charity to Souls only, instead of the more expensive One to the poor Bodies of our Neighbours.

5. The fifth Objection I shall produce, is, a more material one, that is the danger of Impoverishing our selves, or at least lessening our Fortunes, by the burden of such a large and constant Expence, Yearly, during our Life. I answer, this is so far from Truth, that I can affirm the quite contrary upon the Testimony of all that ever made the Experiment—— that the Practice of Charity, and that in a high Degree, is the surest Means, not only to procure a Stability to what we have, but also to encrease our Fortunes. It is certain, that if any Duty that ever was recommended to us from Heaven, can tend to our Felicity either present, or future, and Entitle us to any Blessing from God, or any Reward either here or hereafter, that must be especially the Effect of this blessed Duty in the Works of Mercy and Beneficence; which has the peculiar Privilege to be call'd in many places of Scripture by the general name of *Righteousness*; as if this alone were the sum and abstract of Piety. And it is so highly advanced, that it may seem to be sometime taken for the distinctive Mark, and infallible effect of true Repentance, and Conversion unto God, *Dan. 4. 27. Break off your Sins by Righteousness, and your Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the Poor.* There is no-

thing, next to the Merits and Blood of Christ, that we can do, or perform, so proper and effectual to atone the Mercy and Goodness of God, as exercising Mercy our selves to those that want, and do expect it from us, and are some way qualify'd for it. For this is to transcribe his Copy, *to be Merciful, as our Father which is in Heaven is Merciful*; to be, as it were, instead of God, to those poor Creatures that depend upon us.

To speak the true Advantages and Benefits of Charity, even in this World, accruing to the Practicers of it, wou'd be incredible to a carnal Care. I shall sum up the chief of them from the Word of the God of Truth in one single Passage of Scripture, *Psalms 41. 1, 2, 3. Blessed is he that considereth the Poor, the Lord will deliver him in the time of Trouble, the Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed upon the Earth, and he will not deliver him unto the Will of his Enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the Bed of Languishing, and will make all his Bed in his Sickness.* What can be desired more? is not even his Worldly Fortune here included? The Lord will not only preserve him, and keep him alive; but also he shall be *blessed upon the Earth*; blessed, by the abundant return of that which he hath laid out, which will be sure to come back with Interest, either in Kind, or in some other Blessings which are better for us, in this very World; for as surely as *there is a God that judgeth the Earth*, that dispenseth his Gifts with Equity and Wisdom, and knows a Reason (when we cannot) why he gives more to one, than to another; So surely the same God careth more especially for his own peculiar Servants, those that obey him in the Works of Righteousness: *The Lord careth for the Righteous*, says the Psalmist. He makes God indebted to be his Pay-master, who disburses on his Account; *He that takes Pity on the Poor, lendeth to the Lord, and that which he hath given, he will pay him again*, Prov. 19. 17. And Ephes. 5. 8. *Whatsoever good thing any Man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be Bond or Free.* So that doing Good unto others, is but heaping Blessings upon our own Heads, and dispersing to the Poor, is but sowing a Harvest for our selves to reap. And accordingly the Apostle compares it to Seed sown, 2 Cor. 9. 6. *He that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly, and he that soweth plentifully, shall reap plentifully. And what a Man soweth, that he shall reap*, Galat. 6. 7.

'Tis a certain Truth, of which we have been assured from the Experiments of men of all Ages, who were neither Fools nor Liars, that the Practice of this Duty (without which all our other Endeavours may be blasted) is the only probable way to obtain a Blessing, and encrease on our Worldly Wealth, if any thing we can perform will ever do it. At least it will secure us, and ours, from ever falling under the Scourge of Poverty; unless other Neglects of our Christian Duty be committed by us, which naturally bring Want, as prodigal and luxurious Riot, and Excesses of all Sorts. It is the Practicers of signal Charity that David calls the Righteous: *He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the Poor, his Righteousness endureth for ever.* And the Righteous is ever merciful, and lendeth, that is, lendeth to the Lord, by giving to the Poor; And of the same Righteousness, he tells us, Psalm 37. 25. *I have been young, and now am old, yet never saw I the Righteous forsaken, nor their Seed begging their Bread.* That is, he never saw a signally charitable Person forsaken, nor his Children in want. For the very next Words shews who those Righteous are, Verse 26. *The Righteous is ever merciful, and lendeth, and his Seed is blessed.* Lendeth, that is, lendeth to the Lord, as Prov. 19. 17. *He that hath pity upon the Poor, lendeth to the Lord.* Where Pity and Lending is joyn'd together, as here Mercy and Lending, *The Righteous is ever merciful, and lendeth, and his Seed is blessed.* And I might make the same Challenge to shew me the Man, such a Practicer I say, whose Seed is not blessed in this very World, even beyond those of their covetous Neighbours. To this Purpose, there is a remarkable Story in some of Dr. Hammond's Writings, of one Mr. Hern, a good and very charitable Minister in England, who having a Wife, and many Children, yet had spent all that cou'd be saved of his Livings, in Charity, and perhaps thought to lay up for his Family

mily in his Elder Years before he shou'd Die, but in the middle of his Years, suppose about Forty, he was removed to a better Preferment in Heaven. When dying, his Wife and Children were sadly lamenting their poor Case, all their Livelihood being gone by his Death, he chearfully bade them be of good Comfort: For (says he) *that God that doth feed the Ravens, will not starve the Hens*, aluding to their own Name *Hern*, which is also the name of a certain wild Fowl. And it was strangely observed by all the Dwellers in that Part of *England*, that that Man's Wife and Children, by some Providences or other, were better provided for, and came to greater Fortunes, than most of their Contemporaries, of richer Parents, and great Estates.

'Tis plain also, that very charitable Persons are oftentimes abundantly blest'd with such sort of Blessings as no Wealth can Purchase: as Peace, Satisfaction of Mind, long Life, good Children, Prudence, Discretion and exaltation of Soul above this World, and all the Injuries of it. *St. Jerome* is said to have turn'd over Histories on purpose, and never met in all his Reading, with any merciful *Alms-Giver*, who received not some great and signal Blessing in this very World, as the reward of such Virtue. 'Tis clear, there is nothing more positively promised in all the Scripture, than encrease of Blessing to liberal Charity, *Prov. 11. 25. The liberal Soul shall be made Fat, and he that watereth, shall be water'd also himself: (For there is that scattereth, and yet increaseth)* Verse 24. and *Prov. 14. 21. He that hath mercy on the Poor, happy is he; and most expressly, Prov. 28. 27. He that giveth to the Poor, shall not lack.* Nay, we are so sure of a full Reward in this World, that it might make us rather jealous, our Recompence here being too great, may leave nothing behind for our better Compensation hereafter; which indeed we might be well tempted to think, had we not the same infallible Promise that we have for this Life, given us for the other Life also; and in the World to come Life everlasting, *Luke 18. 30. They shall receive manifold more in this present time, and in the World to come Life everlasting: And tho' they (the Poor) cannot Recompence thee (says Christ) thou shalt be recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just, Luke 14. 14. Oh! the wonderful and amazing great Goodness of our gracious God, who out of his abundant Mercy, has ordain'd such endless and eternal Rewards, over and above the Blessings of this World, for the Practicers of such little and transitory Duties.*

6. The sixth Objection offer'd by many, is this—that they spend much in good House-keeping, and large plentiful Eating and Drinking, which they think Charity enough: For many get Bits at the Door, and so it shou'd not be expected that they can make other Distributions of Charity.

I answer, *Do not even the Heathens and Publicans the same?* What Charity is there in cramming our richer Neighbours, and making them perhaps Drunk in our Houses, that they may make us so again in theirs, which is grown so generally the Practice in our Country? This is the Vain-glory of our Times, which swallows up most of all our Effects from better Uses.

And for Bits at the Door, does any one compute exactly how much they give Yearly to the Poor that way? Which Computation of what is justly due to the Poor, all Christians, out of their own Income, ought fairly to make; that they may be sure they do not wrong the Poor of what is their just Proportion at least. And I have shewn already that the Vagabond-Door-Beggars are not the truest Objects.

Do those great House-keepers take our Saviour's Rule? *Luke 14. 14.*—when they make a Feast, not to invite the richer Neighbours, but the Poor and Needy, *for they cannot Recompence, but thou shalt be recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just.* And do not they often feed perhaps more Dogs than Poor Christians?

We might certainly expend on our richer Neighbours, at convenient Times, what is sufficient for mutual Endearment and Kindness, according to our Ability, of what is left, after our Charity-Dues are truly paid; and they cou'd reasonably expect no more of us. But to spend all the Revenue of the Poor, as well as our own, meerly to pass for Noble House-Keepers, is intolerable Folly. This therefore is a most foolish, proud, and sottish Excuse, for neglecting our necessary Pensions to them that are true Objects of our Charity.

7. The seventh and last Objection I shall produce, is much insisted on by them that flatter themselves, and the World with it: That is, that when they Die, they will do great Matters, and therefore whilst they Live, you must Excuse them.

I answer, This when rightly consider'd, is the most unreasonable Shuffle, in any that wou'd pretend to be Charitable, that can be: 'Tis just as if I wou'd say—I owe the Poor a Pension, laid on me by God Almighty, out of what he has freely given me for their Maintenance, during my Life; but I will defraud the Poor of it, whilst I Live, and when I can Live no longer, I'll leave a certain Pittance on my Heirs or Executors to pay 'em: Just as if I had bargain'd with God Almighty thus—suffer me to Cheat thy Receivers all my Life long, and when the Time comes, that thou art to take all from me (or me from it) then, when I can use it no longer, in gratifying my own Appetites, either of Pride, or Covetousness, I will give thee some of it.

But, not to speak of *Charity*, where is the *Justice* of this fine Contrivance: Those Poor who are my Cotemporaries, and have nothing else to Live on, shall be starved during my Life (and their own too perhaps) and then such Poor as Survive, both them and me, shall have some Pittance, at last, by my Orders when I am gone.

What Self-denial is there in this? The Foundation of all Charity is Self-denial: If I will not deny my self the utmost stretch of Vanity, Luxury, and Gripeing, that my Covetousness, Pride, Pomp, and Pleasure, can reach to (even with Robbing the Poor of their Due) how have I been a Self-denier? Or which is the same Question, how have I been a Christian?

To Practice some signal Instance of *Alms* at our Death is certainly very good: For better late than never; But certainly that will not be accepted as sufficient, instead of the Duty of our whole Life past.

A Christian must Live a Charitable Life; otherwise he is no Christian: Let him conclude his Life by Instances of the same Practice at his Death: But wherefore is it an indispensable Duty to do more Proportion of *Alms* on the Day of his Death, than he is bound to do each Day of his Life?

I knew one of great Fortune (whose Station oblig'd him to great Proportion of Charity) who declared—that when he shou'd Die, he wou'd leave Two Hundred Pound to the Poor. This perhaps was no more than what he ought to have given every Year, or every other Year of his Life, for Twenty Years before he died; but when he died, tho' he left so much in his Will, there was Means found, by his Executors, to avoid the Payment. This is the Case of many of those mortuary Charities.

Is not this a most ridiculous Device? 'Tis just as if I shou'd rob you of your Annual Right all my Life, and when I Die, I will order others to make you a little Reparation in Part: Which perhaps will come, neither to you, nor your Heirs or Executors; but to some one that succeeds in your Office, a Stranger to you and yours.

If we did not value our Temporal Life more than our Spiritual, we might as reasonably Starve our Selves whilst we Live, and propose to make one good Meal when we are Dying, or never Sow our Seeds in our Land till we are just at our Death, but be not deceived, God is not mock'd; for what a Man soweth, that shall he reap, Galat. 6. 7.

And

And thus I have done with the Cavils and Objections, which Covetousness and Folly have raised against this Duty.

IV. I am now to consider the fourth Head proposed, that is, to shew that this Duty, of *Alms-Deeds*, is the only way to know that we are in the Truth of Christianity.

Not that every one who does *Alms-Deeds*, is certainly in the truest Religion (for some *Jews*, *Turks*, and *Heathens* may do it) but that without it, none can be a true Christian; so that tho' this is not a true Proposition, *viz.* every one that does the Duty of *Alms-Deeds*, is a right Christian, yet this other Proposition is certainly true, *viz.* every one that does not the Duty of *Alms-Deeds*, is no right Christian: For tho' all *Alms-Doers* are not true Christians, yet all true Christians are *Alms-Doers*; who must exceed in that Duty the general Practice of others that are not true Christians. There are two chief Marks of a true Christian, *viz.* Faith in Christ, and Practice according to that Faith. If we be in the Faith in Christ, and believe his Gospel, this Duty of *Alms-Doing* is the principal Thing that will assure us we are not Hypocrites in that Faith, or that will make that Faith have it's true effect, compleat and perfect it, and hereby we know that we are of the Truth, and shall assure our Hearts before him, says St. John, 1 John 3. 19. 'Tis hard to be in the Truth, and not know it our selves; and the Scripture affords us no other way of knowing it; hereby know we that we are of the Truth: Whereby? By not shutting up our Bowels of Compassion to the Needy; and so by loving not in Word only, neither in Tongue, but in Deed and in Truth, as the two foregoing Verses have it.

This knowing that we are then of the Truth, is confirm'd to us by five several Ways, which I shall particularly insist on.

1. It is confirm'd to us by the very Nature and Definition of Religion, as St. James defines the *pure and undefiled Religion*: Which is in the first Place, to *visit the Fatherless*, &c. this supposes it to be done for Christ's sake, and through Faith in him. The Sum of the Law and the Prophets, is the Sum of Religion; our Saviour makes the Love of our Neighbour, through him, to be the whole Purport of the Law and the Prophets——So do ye unto them, for this is the Law and the Prophets, Matth. 7. 12. And who is there that wou'd not have his own Case relieved if in want? Christ's beloved Disciple St. John, who, before any, knew his Master's whole Mind, has given us enough of this Description of true Religion, and how we shou'd certainly know it, hereby we know, that we dwell in him, and he in us, 1 John 4. 13. The Verse before it says, No Man hath seen God at any time: If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his Love is perfect in us, and 1 John 5. 2, 3. By this we know that we love the Children of God, when we keep his Commandments, and principally that of Charity, in loving our poor Neighbour, so as to Relieve him; otherwise 'tis no Love in God's account: For 'tis Divine Love the Scripture always speaks of, and hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments, Chapter 2, 3. God's Description of Religion, is to have Mercy rather than Sacrifice, Hosea 6. 6. And our Saviour gives the same, Matth. 9. 13. And again, the same at another time, Matth. 12. 7. Mercy rather than Sacrifice, even the Christian Sacrifice of Prayer; so that we see Mercy, is the *ratio formalis*, the most essential Ingredient, in Christ's Religion, without which, none can possibly have true Faith; nor is it possible for any to have Mercy (joyn'd with such a Belief of the Apostle's Creed, wherein he was Baptized, as influences his Life thereby, adding no other Articles thereunto) but he must by that Mercifulness, especially, know that he is of the Truth. There cannot be a greater Wickedness in Christianity than Cove-

tousness, which the Apostle calls *Idolatry*, twice over, *Colos. 3. 5.* And again, *Eph. 5. 5.* What Covetousness, then, can be greater than coveting God's Due (especially from the Poor) which every Detainer of it does?

This very Duty, of relieving the Indigent, is, in a special manner, call'd the Work, and Labour of Love, which the Apostle says, *God is not Unrighteous to forget, Heb. 6. 10.* As if God were bound by a more than ordinary Obligation of Justice, infallibly, and most speedily to reward such Piety as this, which can never pass, without bringing a Blessing on the Head of the Performer. Certainly, if we consider, how it was our Saviour's whole Work upon Earth to do Good unto others, *Acts 10. 38.* who went about doing Good, to exercise Charity both to the Bodies and Souls of Men, and joyn this to the numerous and frequent Exhortations to that Duty, in all the Discourses of Christ and his Apostles, we cannot but see, that as doing Good to others, is the noblest attainment of Humane Souls; so it is the whole Bent, of all the Fundamental Doctrines of Christianity; the chiefest Work of the Followers of Jesus. St. Paul sticks not to say, that the very end of the Commandment is Charity, *1 Tim. 1. 5, 6.* From which some having swerved (says he) have turn'd aside unto vain jangling. The over Frugal, Covetous, People of this World jangle and wrangle about what Religion is; it's a politick Way for some of them to think it better to have no good Works at all, than be in danger of trusting to them. Religion, on this account, (which indeed is *Scientia practica*, a practical Science) is, in many Places, come to that pass, that ask some People what Religion is, you'll find few of them can answer: They make some speculative Business of it. You'll seldom hear from them that it is, the sacrificing to God both our Selves and our Estates, a good part of each, in the Duties of Alms, Devotion and Purity, through the Faith and Love of Christ, and yet this is really in effect all the Definition Christ and his Apostles give us of it. This Sacrifice, with which God is well pleased (next that of his Son's on the Cross) is the only thing whereby we know that we are of the Truth. And this is the first way instanced, whereby this Knowledge that we are of the Truth, is confirm'd to us, that is, by the very Nature and Definition of Religion.

2. This Knowledge that we are of the Truth, then, when we practice Charity, is confirm'd to us by visible Demonstration and Experience. 'Tis plain, no Man was ever seen to Practice it in a high Degree, but thrived by it. Was ever any Man Read of in Scripture to have pleased God, who demonstrated not a high Degree of this Duty in his Practice? Job, David, Abraham, the Patriarchs and Prophets. The Devout Cornelius's, Practice of giving much Alms to the People, St. Peter call'd working Righteousness—of a Truth, I perceive that in every Nation (for he was none of the Jewish Nation) he that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted of him, *Acts 10. 35.* 'Tis plain, that where People's Treasure is, there will their Hearts be also; and yet nothing more evidently prospers Men, even in this World, than placing their Heart in Heaven, by the Practice of this Heavenly Duty. I told you of the Experiment of Mr. Hern, a very Charitable Clergy-Man in England, how God prosper'd his Wife and Children above all in the Neighbourhood, when Dying he left them nothing, but that Sentence—The God who fed the Ravens, will not starve the Herns. There might be innumerable Instances given of the like, both in the present Age, and in all History. There is one comes just now before me, which I am not willing to pass by. 'Tis in short of an ancient Father, who order'd his Man one Morning to give three Ducats, which was all he then had, to a poor deserving Christian. The Man politickly dismiss'd the poor Object (who knew not the Master's Order) with one Ducat, and he went away highly satisfy'd, with many Prayers and Blessings (a poor Man's Prayer, says the Scripture, reaches the Ears of God) but that Night, or the next, a Present

sent was sent the Father, from some rich Noble Man, of a Hundred Ducats, and his Man benign examin'd, whether he had certainly given all the three Ducats to the poor Man, and confessing he gave but one, O you Fool, says he, because you gave but one, it has return'd but one Hundred; *Si enim tres dedisses, ter centum accepisses*; for if you had given all the three, you had received three Hundred Ducats. God's Providence by all those undiscern'd Agents and Instruments he imperceptibly manages, often brings Things to pass for our Good, by ways that we can give as little account of, as of his more apparent Miracles. But this is a most demonstrative Evidence, that God accepts the Performance, upon which he sends such Blessings. When we find, and know, that our small Endeavours are thus acceptable to him, we know by a Demonstration of Experience, that we are of the Truth, *and hereby we know that we are of the Truth*. And a further Demonstration we have of it, is this, that the Devil, among his own Votaries, can dispense with any thing, but the Practice of Charity: Prayer he can make a shift to allow them very well (especially long-winded Extemporary Prayers) and sometimes can give them a Gift of it; as we find by the printed Trial of Major Weire in Scotland, who was condemn'd and executed in K. Charles the Second his Life time, for Witchery, Incest, and Buggery. That he had a Staff given him by the Devil, which whilst he lean'd on, he had the most ravishing Gift of Prayer that cou'd be desired, and by which he did almost baffle the Judges, and the whole Court, on his Trial. But when they were inform'd of this Staff, by his Sister, then under the same Accusation for Incest with him, who had confess'd all, they took the Staff from him, and he was confounded, and cou'd speak but like another guilty Man. This is Matter of Fact; and tho' this Story may be thought Incredible, yet I appeal to the Book of his Trial, printed by Authoritive License, which I have read above Twenty four Years ago. The like Story we have printed in another Book, call'd the *American Jezebel*, concerning a Woman that was accused of Witchery, who (without the help of any Staff mention'd there) had so extraordinary a Gift of Extemporary Prayer, that she amaz'd all her Hearers, and even some of the Church of England Clergy that went to hear her: She was not executed, but transported to the Indies, where she drew such Numbers after her in America (by her Gift) that she was thence call'd the *American Jezebel*.

For the other Duty of Fasting, we know the Devil's Votaries both the *Druids* (among the Heathens) and the *Dervises* (among the Turks) cou'd, and can, out do, at the Severities of monstrous Fasting, all the sower Anchorites that ever were in Popish Cells, or Monasteries; so that we see Satan can dispense even with Praying and Fasting, but the Duty of Charity in *Alms-Giving*, he can never away with: That is so directly contrary to his Nature, to do so much good to the Poor of Mankind, whom he hates most, that he cannot possibly dispense with, suffer, or promote, such *Sacrifices, with which God is well pleased*; so that well might the Apostle say, *the greatest of these is Charity*. But when some that are not wholly under Satan's Empire, but rather Neuters, as Pharisees, or Hypocrites, will needs be doing some little thing of *Alms*, Satan will endeavour to pervert the Design of it, that it shall not be intended for the Good of Mankind, nor the Good of Christ's Church. Therefore when we know, that our Design is right, for the Good of Christ's Church, and what we heartily and bountifully do of this, is for the Love of Christ, and in Obedience to his Command, for Charity or Love to his Church, and for Mercy and Bowels to his poor Brethren; and that we see the false Enemy of Mankind, cannot imitate us in this, we have then such a Demonstration as may make us know, that we are of the Truth, *and hereby we know that we are of the Truth*.

3. This brings me to the third way, by which this Knowledge is confirmed to us——that we are then of the Truth, when we Practice Charity; that is, by the Testimony of our own Heart or Conscience within us. *If our Heart condemn us not* (says St. John) in the 2d Verse after that, *then have we Confidence towards God.* The Heart and Conscience is here the same thing, and if our Conscience condemn us not of Unfincerity or Hypocrisy, in this Practice, nor yet of the Neglect or Omission of it, which is the greatest Hypocrisy of all; then we have Confidence towards God. Then are we sure and know, that we are of the Truth; if our Conscience testifies to us, that we do his Duty, and that what we do is sincerely done; then we need not fear the condemnation of all the Covetous, Censorious, Envious, precise Hypocrites in the World; if our Conscience can truly tell us, that we have trusted our Money with Christ, out of Confidence in his Promises. This is, indeed, contrary to them who will not trust Christ for their Money; but only for *free Promises* (as they love to insist on) or for any Scheme, or Thing, that will not put them under the Necessity, or danger of losing any of their *Mammon*: They'll sooner venture that, as we see they frequently do, to the hazard of the merciless Seas, than to him. If our Conscience can bear Testimony to our selves, that we so love Christ, as to obey his most pinching Commands, in the true Love of our poor Brethren, for his sake, and Practice a Self-denial on our selves, that we may be the better able to Relieve them; and wou'd rather *work with our Hands* (as the Apostle charges) than not *have wherewith to give him that needeth*, Epes. 4. 28. If our Conscience can testify this for us, and that we do accordingly Practice this Duty in a good, reasonable, Christian Measure, according as God has blessed us; then our Knowledge, that we are of the Truth, is this way confirm'd to us, *and hereby we know that we are of the Truth.*

4. A fourth way, by which this Knowledge is confirm'd to us——that we are, when we practice Charity, then in the Truth, is, by the witness of all Pious, Wise, and Good Men, both of the Primitive and our own Church; *A Cloud of Witnesses*, to assure us, and make us know we are of the Truth.

All the Pious Writings of the blessed Primitive Fathers, and Martyrs, do abound with this Doctrine of Charitable *Alms*, which takes up more of their practical Treatises than any one Thing, or Duty, whatsoever. St. Cyprian has writ a whole Treatise, *De Eleemosyna*, of *Alms*. St. Chrysostome has abundance about it, St. Augustine says, *Via cæli pauper est*, that the very way to Heaven, is the poor Man. 'Tis true, Christ says, he himself is *the Way, and the Life*; but St. Augustine's Expression does not contradict this, for Christ, it's true is the high Way, the great Way, but when People go to the high Way from their own Habitations severally, they must take the smaller path Way first, which leads to the high Way; and this is St. Augustine's Meaning, that by the poor Man's House is the path Way to Christ, who is the great high Way indeed. They all agree, that rich Men are but God's Stewards: We shou'd therefore think that Stewards ought to have but Receiver's Fees; but God gives them all, and expects but Receivers Fees from them, for his own poor Families and Dependants: Is it not a monstrous Ingratitude to deny him that? And yet that, or perhaps, ten times as much, is freely given to Drinking, Gameing, Pomp, Riot, Luxury, or Extravagance.

Our Church of *England* bears Testimony with the Primitive Church; not only in all her most famous Writers (among whom Dr. Hammond, Dr. Taylor, Dr. Cave, and several others, have so zealously insisted on this Duty, that they seem to have made it

the

the principal Design of all their practical Writings) but also, in her authorized Book of Homilies, compos'd by the whole Church of England; particularly in the 23d Homily, containing Three Discourses about *Alms-Deeds*, and Mercifulness to the Poor and Needy (which is the Title given.) There is as much to the Purpose said, in short, and in effect, for the Necessity of it, as any Man's Heart cou'd wish. They make it absolutely necessary to our Salvation. They say, *Alms doth wash away Sins, and Mercy to the Poor doth blot out our Offences*: But yet against the Popish Doctrine of Merits, they make some Explication of their Meaning in those Phrases, and resolve all into a Subordination to Christ's Merits, and free Grace. Yet how necessary they make it to Salvation, you may judge by these Words I shall quote to you out of the third and last part of their Discourses about it. Speaking of those that are apt to make Excuses against the doing of it. Thus, (says the Place) *they seek Excuses to with-hold themselves from the Favour of God, and chuse with pinching Covetousness, rather to lean unto the Devil, than by charitable Mercifulness, either to come unto Christ, or to suffer Christ to come unto them. Oh, that we had some cunning or skilful Physicians; that were able to purge them of this so pestilent an Humour, that so sore infecteth not their Bodies, but their Minds; and so by corrupting their Souls, brings their Bodies and Souls into danger of Hell Fire* — Thus they. The Testimony of all these Witnesses (which I think may well be call'd a Cloud of Witnesses indeed) is one sure way of confirming to us our Knowledge, that we are of the Truth, whilst we Christianly Practice this blessed Duty of Charitable *Alms-Deeds*: Hereby we know that we are of the Truth.

5. I have yet the last, and highest, Way to speak to, by which this Knowledge is most infallibly confirmed to us — that when we Practice the Christian Charity of *Alms-Deeds* as we ought, we are then of the Truth. That is, by the Testimony of the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, speaking to us in the Divine Scriptures. And first, I begin with our Saviour's first Sermon, that on the Mount, *Matth. 5. 7. Blessed are the Merciful, for they shall obtain Mercy.* And St. Paul recommended to all the Christians, in the very last Words of his farewell Speech, at parting, when he said they shou'd see his Face no more, *Acts 20. 35. To remember the Words of our Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to give, than to receive.* And *Galat. 6. 2. Ye so fulfil the Law of Christ* (says he) *if ye bear one anothers Burdens.* And St. James calls it fulfilling the Royal Law, *James 2. 8.* And the Scripture makes it the very end of Christ's giving himself for us, that he might make us a peculiar People zealous of good Works, *Tit. 2. 14.* When Christ commands St. John, in the Revelations, to write to the seven Churches, his first Salutation, repeated to every one of them, in seven several Places, in the 2d and 3d Chapters, is this, *I know thy Works*: The first Thing he brings to Test is the Works, and the Labour. As particularly in the 19th Verse of the 2d Chapter, *I know thy Works, and Charity, and Service, thy Faith and Patience, and thy Works, that the last be more than the first.* (God grant ours may be so, I am sure we have need on't) and in the 23d Verse, *All the Churches shall know, that I am he that searcheth the Reins and the Hearts, and will give to every one of you according to his Works.* We find when a Learn'd Lawyer (as I instanced before) ask'd our Saviour, *What shall I do, to inherit Eternal Life,* he directed him to Works of Charity, by that Example of the good Samaritan's to a wounded Stranger, with the dismiss, *Go thou and do likewise.* And again, when a young Man ask'd him what he shou'd do to have Eternal Life, he bade him, *Sell that thou hast, and give to the Poor, and thou shalt have Treasure in Heaven, and follow me,* *Matth. 19. 21.* 'Tis true, Christ bade him sell all, and tho' that is not the Duty of all Christians, yet we see hereby, what a value Christ puts on Charity. And St. Peter tells us, this is the way to make our Calling

and Election sure, by giving Diligence to do these Things, 2 Peter 1. 10. For if ye do these Things, ye shall never fall, for so an Entrance shall be ministred unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And what those Things are, by the doing of which, we shou'd make our Calling and Election sure: We are told by the foregoing Verses, among the rest, *Brotherly Kindness, and Charity*; the rest it seems were all defective, and something still to be added: *Add to Faith Virtue* (says the 5th Verse) *and to Virtue Knowledge, and to Knowledge Temperance, and to Temperance Patience, and to Patience Godliness, and to Godliness brotherly Kindness, and Charity.* There's the finishing Stroak of Perfection; nothing more is added to them: For, says the very next Words (which must principally relate to the two last named, *Brotherly Kindness and Charity*) *if these Things be, and abound in you, they make you, that you shall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*; which particular Expression, cannot possibly relate to all the foregoing Duties named; for Knowledge is named before among the rest, and it wou'd be a Solecism, or Tautology, to say, that Knowledge wou'd make you not be unfruitful in Knowledge; and indeed all the Christian Duties are abovenamed too, and 'twou'd be needless to say that all these wou'd make you not to be Barren; therefore that must be applied only to the two last Things there named, *Brotherly Kindness, and Charity*, without which indeed all our Religion will be barren, and unfruitful. And whereas we are commanded to give Diligence to do these Things; 'tis certainly in our Power, through Grace, to do them: Otherwise, 'twou'd be in vain to be bid to give Diligence, to do what we cannot do, so that it must be in our Power. God hath put it in our Power to ensure our Election, by thus doing: *For if you do these Things you shall never fall.* And as this is the only way to make our Election sure, so it is the certain way to make us know it is sure: It is so certainly the Foundation of our knowing we are of the Truth, that the not doing thus, is the sure way to know we are not of the Truth, so long as we neglect this Practice: For there may be a falling from the Truth, after we are sure we are in it, if we fall from our Christian Practice again. *If a Man draw back, my Soul hath no Pleasure in him,* says God, *'tis he that endureth unto the End shall be saved.* Nay, a Man may be so far sure of his being of the Truth, as to have his Name written in the Book of Life, and yet upon falling back finally from his Duty, may have his Name blotted out of the Book of Life again, as Rev. 3. 5. *I will not blot his Name out of the Book of Life,* compared with the 22. 19. where he takes out of the Book of Life, and Exod. 32. 33. *Him will I blot out of my Book,* and other Places to the same Purpose. So that only so long as we continue in this Christian Duty of charitable Practice, so long we are sure of our Condition, and know we are then of the Truth. For that we are so then, the whole Word of God confirms to us in the highest manner. Nay, 'tis so full, plain, and abounding in this, that perhaps there was never the like number of Texts to be brought for any thing. For further Evidence of which, I may refer to the large Sermon I last Year publish'd on this Subject, concerning the Practice of Charity to the Poor. This may serve instead of a second Edition, to above half of it, the first being all disposed of. By what Scriptures I have here offer'd, it may abundantly be seen, how the Testimony of the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost speaking to us in the Divine Scripture, does most infallibly confirm this Knowledge to us, that whilst we Practice this Christian Duty, we cannot but know we are of the Truth. Thus I have shewn the five Ways, whereby the certain Knowledge is confirmed to us——that when we thus sincerely Practice, we are, then, of the Truth.——First, By the very Nature and Definition of Religion. Secondly, By visible Demonstration and Experience of the Providential Rewards that follow it. Thirdly, By the Testimony of our own
Hearts,

Hearts, and Consciences. Fourthly, By the Testimony of all Pious, Wise, and Good Men. Fifthly, By the Testimony of the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, speaking to us in the Divine Scriptures. And all these five Ways (which give us as much Certainty, each of them singly, as any Heart can desire) do joyntly concur to ascertain us, and confirm this Knowledge, that (whilst we thus Practice) we are of the Truth, and hereby we know that we are of the Truth.

If we, therefore, who call our selves Christians, do despise or neglect this principal Law of Christ; since *he that despised Moses' Law died without Mercy*; what will become of us? My Christian Brethren, if we reject this, 'tis not my Advice ye reject, but God's: For I am very sure, that they who wou'd dislike this, must find another sort of Scripture, than ever we have yet seen; before this can, with any Colour of Reason, be denied, to be the clear Revelation of the Will of our God, and the indispensable Doctrine of Christ our Saviour.

If there be any among us, to whom the Labour I have bestowed, on this Subject, proves vain; who are not convinced by what has been said; I have done with such. I have only this Comfort left—I have delivered my own Soul: The Lord be Merciful to us all.

BOOKS

BOOKS Published by the same Author.

A Conference between the Soul and the Body, concerning the present and future State: Shewing how different the general Practice of Religion now is from that of the first Christians. *London* printed by J. Downing, for Richard Smith.

An Answer to Mr. *Asgill's* Book, about his Translation to Heaven without Death, &c. upon occasion of which, the true Nature of Saving Faith, the true Gospel Repentance, and the Soul's Immortality (all by him Ignorantly abused, and too often by many others) are plainly stated and clear'd. *Dublin* printed.

A short View of the Popish Doctrine of Transubstantiation. *Dublin* printed.

A Reply to Mr. X's Answer to the short View of Transubstantiation. *Dublin* printed by S. Powel.

A Brief Reply to N. C.'s modest and true Account, &c. so far as concerns his Answer to Archbishop Tillotson's Discourse against Transubstantiation. *Dublin* printed by A. Rhames.

The Popish false Notion of the Catholick Church, with a short Account of the dangerous Usurpations, and treasonable Designs and Practices of Popery. *Dublin* printed by John Brocas.

Some Brief Remarks on the Subtilty and Craft of the Romans: Wherein most of their fraudulent Devices are laid open. *Dublin* printed for John Ware.

An Answer to a Popish Book of J. S. call'd a Treatise plainly shewing the only Religion, &c. *Dublin* printed by A. Rhames.

An Answer to Irwin mac Culagh's Popish Net for the Fishers of Men. *Dublin* printed by S. Powel.

A Catechism compos'd as an Antidote against Popery. *Dublin* printed by S. Powel.

A School Catechism for the Charity Scholars, - to read after they have Learn'd the Church Catechism, with the Addition of Youths Poems. *Dublin* printed by S. Powel. The 2d Edition.

A Day's Preparation for the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper, fitted for the plainest Capacities of those that have least Time, of all, to attend Sacred Duties: With Directions and Prayers, before, at, and after Receiving. The 2d Edition. *Dublin* printed by S. Powel.

A large Sermon for the Practice of Charity in Alms-Deeds. *Dublin* printed by S. Powel.

The Death-Bed Repentance fully consider'd, proving that no meer Death-Bed-Repentance can be Effectual for wicked Christians, but only to lessen their Damnation: And fully answering all Objections hitherto met with. *Dublin* printed by A. Rhames.

A Conference between Two Friends, a Calvinist and Church of England-Man, about Predestination, *Dublin* printed by S. Powel.

Short Notes on Dr. Edward's long Book of, *Veritas Redux*. *Dublin* printed by A. Rhames.

An Answer to the Apology of Mr. Sam. Henry, (who stiles himself) Dissenting Minister at Sligo. *Dublin* printed by A. Rhames.

A Method of Charity-Schools, recommended for giving a Religious Education, and way of Livelihood to the poor Children in Ireland, &c. *Dublin* printed by A. Rhames.

A
METHOD
OF
Charity-Schools,
Recommended, for giving, both a Religious Edu-
cation, and way of Livelihood to the POOR
CHILDREN in
IRELAND.

NOW I am come to the main Proposal, which is the chief End, all I have spoken to already, in my foregoing Discourse of Charity in *Alms-Deeds*, aims at; which was but Preparatory to this *Charity*, towards the *POOR-CHILDREN*; the chief sort of *Alms-Deeds*, now, wanting in the World. This is clearly deducible from our *Saviour's* Words, *John 21. 15. Feed my Lambs*: He first commanded *this*, before he said—*Feed my Sheep*. To begin, therefore, at the right end, we must begin at his *Lambs*, whom he commanded to be fed, with the Food of *Saving Knowledge*, the Food of *Eternal Life*; that they might not Perish, for
B lack

lack of Knowledge, as God complains by the Prophet, *Hosea* 4. 6. *My People are destroyed for lack of Knowledge.* And without this Care, in their *Schooling* and *Education*, Christ's *poor Lambs* must, unavoidably, Perish for lack of Knowledge.

It will not be in the Power of the *Clergy*, to prevent this Destruction, unless the People, of this Nation, provide that the *LAMBS* of *Christ* be put into a Capacity of being Instructed: What does it signify to have Teachers, if their Flock be not enabled to understand and attend their Instruction?

The poor naked Wretches (who are the most Numerous of all the *Children* in this *Kingdom*) despair, and are hopeless (through Cold and Shame) of any other way of Living, than by turning Vagabonds, Beggars and Thieves: How can *these* (as we see they do not) come to hear and learn their Christian Duty?

The great Advantage, and Excellency, of this sort of *Charity*, to the *poor Children*, which no other can equal, will be indisputably evident to any one, who considers these few Things following.

First, That this is the best Means to save both the Bodies and Souls of those we give it to: For as to their *Bodies*, it puts them into a way of Livelihood, by freeing them from Nakedness, Cold, Hunger, Prison and Gallows: As to their *Souls*, 'tis an unquestionable way of Salvation.

Secondly, It saves Us and our Posterity from being *robbed*: For they, who, when they were Young, had nothing to depend on, except that Law of Christian Charity, by which the Providence of God assigned them on us for *Livelihood* and *Education*, will, when they grow up to be Numerous and Able, revenge our Uncharitableness, towards their tender Years, by *Robbing* us, and Stealing from us, what they can. The King of the World, the Lord of Hosts, our Lord
Jesus,

Jesus, has billeted them on us; and allows them his *Kings-Rent*: Shall we rob them? *Will a Man rob God?* Says the Lord, by the Prophet, *Malachy* 3. 8. *Tet ye have robbed me.* And tho' it be said there, in Tythes and Offerings; yet the Tythes and Offerings of the *poor Man* are included in them. The Third-part-Tythes (which belonged to the *Poor*, as I have already shewn from *Deutr.* 4. 28.) was, as well as other Tythes, robb'd from God by those covetous People: Therefore he tells them——*Ye are cursed with a Curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole Nation.* If we desire to save our selves from this Curse, and from being robbed of all we have (and of our Lives, in all Probability, or the Lives of our Posterity.) We must, certainly, do this *Duty*——of providing for the *poor Children.*

Is not every one of us desirous to provide for Posterity? They who have no Children, if they have any Honesty (or even Humanity) do not willingly condemn the Posterity of their Families to Ruin: For, then, some of their Relations, or Friends, must suffer. How earnest are all People to provide Fortunes for their Children? Ought they not, then, to consider that the *poor Children* of the Nation, who have no Subsistence, are, at present, much more numerous than the Richer, who have some Livelihood? Twenty or thirty Years hence, the Over-proportion will be much greater, because the present *poor Ones* (and their encreasing Posterity) must be, then, more exquisite, and established, in their growing Villany and Roguery, through Ignorance, Idleness, Want, and Desperateness: Therefore the more Fortune an honest Man leaves his Child, the sooner he is made a Prey to these barbarous People, and has his Throat cut for it. For my part, I think, I might almost as securely venture my Children to dwell among so many Savages, as among such a Generation, as this Nation is like to have in Twenty or Thirty Years more, unless we give honest Christian Education, and Livelihood, to the poor Children.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It saves our whole Nation and Government from Destruction. The Rebellion of wicked People, when they grow too many for us, must end in Destruction. There is no Kingdom in *Europe*, that has any prospect of Stability (and that has not an actual War in the Bowels of it) in so ill a Case, as we now are, with respect to this Matter: For our *poor Children*, unprovided for, are more Numerous, by far, in Proportion, than those of any other Nation. Others make some Provision, either by Sea, or Land, for most of the *poorer Sort*; such as may bring up their *Children* to Industry, and to getting their Liveliness; but we let all run into Idleness, Immorality, Debauchery, Villany, and, at last, unavoidable Rebellion. Vagabonds, sturdy Beggars, Thieves, Robbers, High-way-Men, Raparees or Tories, Houghers, Murderers and Rebels, do all spring from want of honest Education, and Employments, to live by; Ignorance, Want, Idleness and ill Example ruin all. 'Tis impossible for any Kingdom to continue in Peace or Order, when wicked Subjects are increased to such a Degree, as to be able to destroy the honestest Sort, and bring the whole Government into Confusion, with Number of Hands. They are ready to joyh with foreign *Enemies*, and to raise domestick *Rebellions* upon all occasions: Therefore our National Government (and consequently our Liberties, Properties, Laws, Religion and Lives) can never subsist long, without providing for the *Education* and *Livelihood* of these *poor Children*. Other Nations, Strangers to us, will not believe, how much the People among us, are worse than *Heathens*. Most of these (even in our own Kingdom) who constantly reside in *DUBLIN* (or other civilized *Cities*) and have not seen the Country, can scarce give Credit to the Relations of the monstrous Barbarity of all Parts of the *Country* distant from them. This will not only, always, continue so; but grow worse: Every new *Generation* producing a new *Rebellion*; unless we do (which 'tis high time to do now, if ever) thus provide for the Education and Livelihood of the *poor Children*.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, This Sort of *Charity* is the only way to save *Christianity* from Perishing, and the World from growing finally Wicked, and ripe for the last Destruction by Fire: God will not destroy a good World, until they degenerate so wholly as to be fit for nothing but Destruction; as they were in the Days of *Noah* (when the first Destruction came) when there was but one Righteous Family left on Earth. And 'twill be so again, when *Christ* comes to Judge the World——*When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find Faith upon Earth?* Luke 18. 8. And——*As the Days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be,* Matth. 24. 37. The World is desperate enough already: Such a Torrent of Iniquity seeming to be let loose upon us, that it is unimaginable what possible Means, which does not new-mould Mankind in General, can stop the Flood of Immorality and Prophaneness. If we mean, with God's Assistance, to new-mould the *World*, we must begin at the *Children*. It was so, *Christ* began——*Suffer little CHILDREN to come unto me——For of such is the Kingdom of Heaven:* He first, therefore, commanded to feed his *LAMBS*. When *John Baptist* sent his *Disciples* to *Christ*, to know by what Token he was the *MESSIAS*, one of the principal Marks he gave, was——*To the POOR the Gospel is preached,* Luke 7. 22. And of all the *Poor*, whatsoever, *poor Children* are the likeliest to be benefited by the *Gospel*: They being the most capable Subjects to Work upon; as having no other Care on their Head. No Season is so fit for the *Gospel*, as that wherein tender Years, before Vice grows Habitual, become capable of all Impressions. We find the *Gospel* Rules of Virtue very Ineffectual upon such, as are first hardened in Sin. Not one, in a Hundred, perhaps, of them, proves the better, for all we can say. Old *Drunkards*, very often, must continue so, on Pain of Death: For otherwise, if they alter their Custom, 'tis propable, they'll Die: They who are used to *Whoreing*, can scarce, tho' their Lives lay at Stake, leave it off: They that are used to *Cheating*, *Lying*,
I
Thieving,

Thieving, Envy, Malice, Swearing and Evil-Speaking can, with as much Ease, take Pleasure in stripping off their Skins, as divesting themselves of those Vices. If ever they do it, 'tis with great Pain and Difficulty; as hard, sometimes, as——
For the Black-moor to change his Skin, or the Leopard his Spots,
 Jerem. 13. 23. Children, as the Word of God assures us, are like *soft Wax*, which will receive any Impression you first put on it——*Train up a CHILD in the way he shou'd go, when he is Young, and when he is Old, he will not depart from it,*
 Prov. 22. 6. If ever we hope, therefore, to reform the World, 'tis to these (among those already call'd Christians) we must apply all our Labours. Heathens, or Pagans, might be converted at Elder Age; but they who in Christianity, are long hardened in Wickedness, are much more Incurable: Because they have so long resisted the Ordinances of God, and, in a manner, *done Despite to the Spirit of Grace*. If ever we expect, or hope for Success, in bringing any Numbers of Christians to that Virtue, to which they have not already attain'd, it must be among the *Children*: For very few of them, especially among the *poorer Sort*, if due *Education* were given to them, wou'd fail. And this must be the way, if ever Christianity be retrieved.

So that I may, with all Assurance, say,—— This is the only way towards the *Reformation of Manners*; so much lately endeavour'd; but with too little Success, for want of this. No Societies, or Combinations, in the behalf of Virtue, will ever, effectually, prevail, without this.

Had this been generally begun, when the other commendable Societies for *Reformation of Manners* did begin, Twenty Years ago, we shou'd now have had Forty Thousand Christian Men, from amongst those *Children*; who had not bowed unto *Baal*; but been Virtuously bred up, from their Childhood. And these Forty Thousand wou'd, now, be all Men (for I shall hereafter prove that Two Thousand Boys wou'd Yearly be set out, from these Schools, in this Kingdom, according to this Method) Militating in our Nation, for God
 and

and his Church, against Vice and Immorality; and as *Josiah*, while he was yet Young, *seeking after the God of David*. What *Belial* could stand before such an Army of young true Christians, when their Hands would be joyn'd with those, who yet remain Zealous for the Lord of Hosts, in our *Israel*? *England* is grown rightly Sensible of this, at last; and as they gave us the first Example of those worthy Societies for the Reformation of Manners: so they, now, are giving us abundant Examples of this true, and only, last Remedy to destroy Vice effectually, and pluck up Iniquity by the Root. Their Charity-Schools are already near Five Hundred, as I am Credibly inform'd. What are we doing then? Can we stand still and see Immorality and Prophaneness settle it self in our Land, to future Ages, by taking Possession of our Children? Shall we suffer prodigious Vices, endless Factions and Divisions, to be entailed on our Posterity?

Were People generally, from their Youth, bred up to Honesty, Piety and Virtue, false Religion (as well as Vice) must absolutely be banish'd from amongst Christians: The growth of Immorality and Vice supports both Popery and Sectarianism. Popery, on the one hand, is supported by it; because wicked Livers can hope to be saved no other way than by the Masses and Charms of their Clergy. Separation, on the other hand, is supported by it; because some Squeamish People make the visible growth of Debauchery and Ill-Life an Excuse for Separating from us; pretending to set up purer Ordinances; at the same time Spiritual-Pride and Hypocrisy are as rampant on their side, as open Debauchery is on the Popish side: For their Spiritual-Pride and Hypocrisy (together with their tearing the Body of Christ by Separation) end in equal Mischief with Popery, and as much forward our destroying one another by Divisions and Parties, as the very worst and most abominable Heresy could do. A Kingdom divided against it self cannot stand (says the God of Truth,) Mark 3. 24.

Now,

Now, I think, there shou'd need no more to convince, any willing Heart, not only of the great Advantages and Excellency of this sort of *Charity*, above all others; but also of the absolute *Necessity* of thus *Educating*, and *Providing* for, our *poor Children*, on pain of our own *Temporal*, as well as *Eternal*, Condition. But because I wou'd omit nothing that I think may be useful to the recommending this Duty, I shall add these few Things.

First, I shall here repeat the Postscript of the fore-mention'd Sermon for *Charity* (printed above a Year ago) because it contains something Pertinent to the Matter.

Secondly, I shall here Publish the Address I presented to the *Justices*, and *Gentlemen*, of the *Grand-Jury* for the County of *SLIGOE*, at the General *Affizes* held at *Sligoe*, about the time the *Houghers* were *Troublesome* to us, which my Unworthiness, I thank God, has not hindred from being so Successful, that several *Schools* have been since erected in the said County.

Thirdly, I shall give an Account of the *Charity-Schools* already raised, and others in Prospect to be soon up, in *Connaught*; together with the Methods for that, and the particular Charge of each Scholar.

Fourthly, I shall conclude, and compleat the Whole, with her most Gracious *MAJESTIES* Letter, to the Arch-bishop of *Canterbury*, publish'd last Year, in the Publick Prints, which Letter encourages *Charity-Schools*. A Letter which for the admirable, and extraordinary *Wisdom* and *Piety* of it, is worthy to be recorded in Letters of *GOLD*, and transmitted to all Posterity.

First, The above-mention'd Postscript is thus.

Since this was sent to the Press, and most of it printed, there came a Book to my Hands, which I knew nothing of before, printed in *London*, containing a Sermon for *Charity*,
Preached

Preached by the Reverend Doctor FRANCIS GASTREL. And thereunto is Annexed an Account of Charity-Schools lately Erected in England, Wales, and Ireland, for poor Children; which I own I never knew, nor heard any thing of, before. It has been the Occasion indeed of a mighty Joy and Satisfaction to me, to find how the same good Spirit has Influenced, as it were with one Heart, and one Mind, so many distant People, even in divers Nations, to Conspire as it were, in the same sort and distinct Practice of so High and Blessed a Charity, as no other Sort can equal. And much what with the very same particular Circumstances in all the Management, as to Cloathing, Schooling, Pious Discipline, and setting the Children out Apprentices, or to some honest Livelihood in the World, after their Education is perform'd. Which to my certain Knowledge is done by some in *Ireland*, in every of those Particulars exactly, which that Book informs us many of the best Schools are regulated by, without ever knowing or hearing one Syllable that the like was ever done by others before, or that ever there were any such Schools at all. But I confess I was more than a little Troubled to find *Ireland* so much short of *Wales* it self; that for Thirteen of such Schools in *Wales*, there is but Three named in *Ireland*. Tho' we of *Ireland* have much more cause of Expressing our Gratitude to the Lord, for his Signal Deliverances of us, upon whom the whole Storm of the Civil Wars lay in our late Troubles. And as we had then but a bad Character with our Neighbour Nation of *England*, who called us Generally the Proud *Irish*, May the Lord give us such a Heart as may alter that Stile now, and make them call us the Charitable *Irish*: Which indeed can never be done, whilst so much of our Substance runs out in the Sluces of Luxury, and Vanity, and so little in the Blessed Works of Charity. I earnestly desire all, whom my Inconsiderable Words can Influence, to read over that Book above-named, Printed and Sold by *Joseph Downing* in *Bartholomew-Close, London*, with Dr. *Gastrel's* Excellent Sermon Prefix'd. And I hope God will move their Hearts to follow some

of those Blessed Examples, that the true Light of Gospel Piety may at last shine forth in this Degenerate Age, and Dazle the Enemies of our Holy Church, and of the true Religion of Christ, taught by her: When they see it Profess'd by us, *not in Word, nor in Tongue, but in Deed, and in Truth,* 1 John 3. 18. and James 1. 22, 25. *Be ye Doers of the Word, and not Hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*—*Not a forgetful Hearer, but a Doer of the Word, this Man shall be blessed in his Deed.*

Secondly, The Address to the *Justices and Gentlemen* of the *Grand-Jury* for the County of *Sligoe*, above-mention'd, is thus.

Gentlemen,

I Think it no less than my bounden Duty to Endeavour all I can, for the publick Good; in Comparison of which I count my own private Advantage as nothing. This is it, which makes me venture to Trouble you with these few Considerations. We are all under the same desire, of having our Selves and our Posterity settled in Peace and Happiness in this Nation: which without the Blessing of God, can never be effected. And it is evident, nothing can oblige God's Providence to Establish us in such Felicity, so much as the Duty of Charity to those poor Souls he has left among us, without any other Dependance, for their Education in any way of Honesty and Goodness, than our just dispensing of a small Proportion, which is a just Debt from us due to them, out of that comfortable Lot he has allowed to us in the World: Which might, without too much pinching our own Fortunes (nay, which may be spared out of our very superfluous and extravagant Expences) bring them up in a Christian Education, and put them in a way to subsist Honestly in the World, and be useful Subjects to the Common-wealth. The Neglect of this, is most evidently the Cause of all our present Dangers in this Kingdom; it has necessitated so many to turn Vagabonds and Thieves, and to run into all Wickedness, ready to Murder all others,

others, and to destroy their Government ; which if God did permit, it wou'd be but a just Judgment for our Neglect, both of the Souls and Bodies of Poor, whom God has left among us, to take Care of, by the Law of Nature, and especially by the very Fundamental Law of Christianity ; which is Charity, called in the Scripture, *the fulfilling of the Law.*

Now it is plain, that this Duty is so easy, that if every one gave no more to that Use, than what was commanded to that hard-hearted People the Jews, in the Law of God by Moses, which was a Thirtieth Part, and makes no more than Eight Pence *per* Pound of our Coin. This, or much less than this, wou'd Cloath and Educate all the poor Youths in the Nation, and give them Three Pound a-piece, after, to set them to some honest Occupation in the World. 'Tis clearly and evidently Demonstrable, by the lowest Estimate or possible Calculation, that Sixteen Thousand poor Boys wou'd be so maintained at once in this Kingdom ; and consequently Two Thousand poor Boys wou'd be thus set out every Year : This in Twenty Years wou'd be Forty Thousand ; and that it self wou'd be Number enough to Ballance for, or against, the Government, so as to put us either in Safety or Danger accordingly.

Gentlemen, you see the Case we are now in ; and it's a marvel we are not in a worse already ; which indeed we cou'd hardly be in, without actual Destruction to the Kingdom. We know that this Remedy is not suddenly now to be expected, so fully as it shou'd in a Parliamentary Way ; nor is that Charity, which may be imposed on us by our State Rulers, so acceptable to God, as a voluntary Discharge of that Duty which Christ has laid on us by our Religion, as the Livery of his Servants : *By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples,* says Christ.

If in every County or Barony, each Town, or Union of Parishes, wou'd among themselves, by a just or general Contribution, Erect a small *Charity-School* (to which Thirty Shillings *per Ann.* for every poor Boy wou'd be sufficient for all the above Purposes) it wou'd answer us with all the Blessings

we can reasonably expect. If there were no Providence (as the Deists wou'd have it) that governed the World, yet plain Reason wou'd Evidence this. It wou'd be an Affront to your Prudence, to think that any of you imagine (as I have heard many others Object) that this Work shou'd be left to the Clergy : it were as reasonable to think, none shou'd be Christians but they, and to leave all Justice, Honesty, and Virtue, as well as Charity, to them only to perform ; they will undoubtedly joyn their Part according to their Fortune.

Now because some must begin this for an Example, and what only one particular Man does will pass into no Example, I hope your own Goodness will move you to begin in this Example, by joyning in your own Districts severally, for so blessed a Work, which no other Charity can ever Equal. The Success of it is unimaginable ; nor cou'd I believe it my self, till I had Experience of it by Trial these Two Years past. I always measured such a Thing by the Schools I knew, when we were Boys, being generally Intractable, Idle, and Stubborn : But I have now found by certain, and undoubted Experience, that poor Boys are the most Docile, and will generally make, by true Education, the best Christians probably in the Kingdom, scarce one of them failing, if taken in time.

Gentlemen, it wou'd be the greatest Honour to you, as well, as bring the greatest Blessings on your Heads, to be the first Leaders to such a Heavenly Work : Your Examples wou'd certainly bring in your Neighbourhood ; and who knows, how soon it may spread all over the Kingdom ? I hope Satan has not so blinded them all yet, but that they will see the inestimable Benefit, and absolute Necessity of it, in our Nation. There are, already, above Four Hundred such *Charity-Schools* in *England*, as the printed Accounts do shew ; and the Number daily encreasing. And it is plain, we have much more need of it than they. I shall say no more ; but if you consult your Consciences, your Religion, and your necessary Safeties, in this Land, you cannot disapprove this. And may God direct your Hearts by that *Wisdom which is from above,*

as you are already *Wise-men*, to shew your selves right *Christians*, and true *Patriots* to your Country, the Lord grant, that we may see, and know in these our Days the Things that belong to our Peace. I am, Gentlemen,

Your Affectionate and Humble Servant.

When I here mentioned Sixteen Thousand Boys, I took Care (lest there shou'd be any Error) to Err on the safest Side. I computed Eight Pence per Pound of our Coin to be equivalent to a Penny an Acre of our Land Rent; supposing that but Two Shillings Six Pence per Acre, one with an other. But I have since computed better, from the exact Record of the whole Survey of Ireland, for which I rely'd on *Borlases's History of the Rebellion of Ireland*, who gives us a Schedule thereof in the beginning of his Book, by which Ireland is affirmed to contain *Ten Millions, Eight Hundred Sixty Eight Thousand, Nine Hundred Forty Nine Acres* Irish Plantation Measure. Now a Penny per Acre, on that Number, will Maintain *Thirty Thousand One Hundred and Ninety BOYS*, at Thirty Shillings each per Ann. But if we confine the Number to *Sixteen Thousand*, it wou'd give them above *Two POUND Sixteen Shillings and Six PENCE* a-piece. So that a Half-penny an Acre wou'd go near doing what I propos'd, especially with the help of Trades in great Cities, and Stock, and all Personal Estates. This wou'd go near to give half the Boys double Allowance, to Diet them; a single Allowance of *Thirty Shillings* a-piece might serve the other half, for the Reasons I shall shew anon. But to be sure, the value of a Penny an Acre, or Eight Pence per Pound (which is near the Equivalent, and wou'd be better to reckon upon, as fitting all Personal Estates) wou'd Plentifully provide for the *Sixteen Thousand BOYS*, with a greater half of them in double Allowance. The Whole to be sub-divided upon each Province and County proportionably, as was done in the Act about Trees Planting. They that have voluntarily contributed, ought to be allowed in the Cess accordingly. Such a Provision, for

this Charity, by a Parliamentary Cess (to be at a Certainty from falling again) as some worthy Persons think of, would be a most noble Act; so it were placed Proportionably upon the abler Men's Substance, whether in Estate, Trade, Tythes or Stock; but not upon the poor Ter-Tenants; and none to be Cessed under Twenty Pound a Year clear Income. But this Expectation shou'd not hinder our proceeding to lay the right Foundation first, by our voluntary Charity: For God knows, when this Act of Parliament will come; they in *England* have no Act of Parliament; and yet these sort of *Charity-Schools* are there (instead of falling or decaying) running on, as the Gospel did at first, with a triumphant Progress, to which *Souls are daily added to be saved*. There will be use enough for a Parliament-Cess after, to pick up all the other poor Children (which will be far the greater Number) who will lie between the Places of the Schools, more than Two Miles from any School. These, if allowed Thirty or Forty Shillings a-piece more than the rest, may be dieted, and placed in any Town among the rest; and so all our poor Children would be provided for through the whole Kingdom.

Thirdly, I am now to give an Account of the *Charity-Schools* already Raised, and others in Prospect, to be soon up, in *Connaught*; together with the Methods for them, and the particular Charge of each Scholar.

The first School was set up at *Primrose-Grange*, in the County of *SLIGOE*, Two Years and a half ago, upon the Estate of *EDWARD NICHOLSON*, Clerk; and is maintained by him alone; who has also built a decent *School*, or *Chapel*, for their constant Prayers, with a *Belfry*, *Bell*, and Seats for Sitting and Kneeling, and all the Roof Wainscoted over Head.

The second School was set up at *Castlereagh*, in the County of *ROSCOMMON*, about half a Year ago, that is, about *Easter*, *One Thousand Seven Hundred and Twelve*, and is maintained by the Contributions of several *Patrons* and *Benefactors*: Of which School, the present *Minister* of the Place,

JOHN

JOHN BULLINGBROOKE, Clerk; with some Help from another *Minister*, Maintains the one half.

The third School was set up at *SLIGOE*, about *May* last, *One Thousand Seven Hundred and Twelve*, and is wholly maintained by the sole Contributions of the good *Lay-Gentlemen*, Patrons or Benefactors.

The fourth School was set up at *Baldwingargin*, alias *Castle-Baldwin*, in the County of *SLIGOE*, about *May* last, *One Thousand Seven Hundred and Twelve*, and is maintained half of it, by the Landlord of the Town, *Doctor HENRY NICHOLSON*; the rest by the Contributions of several Patrons or Benefactors.

The fifth School is just set up at *Coloony*, in the County of *SLIGOE*. The Patrons have not all perfected their Subscriptions.

The sixth School is setting up at *Abby-Boyle*, in the County of *ROSCOMMON*. The Subscriptions are not yet perfected.

The seventh School is likewise expected to be at *Achonry*, in the County of *Sligoe*.

The eighth School at *Gallway*, in the County of *GALLWAY*, which I hope is up already by the Means of the Reverend *DOCTOR SHAW*, his *GRACE's* Commissioner in that *Diocefs* of *TUAM*.

But that which shou'd have Precedence of all the rest, tho' it happen'd not to be the first up, (by reason of his *GRACE's* Avocations, on more important Affairs) is the *Charity-School* of *HOLLYMOUNT*, in the *Diocefs* of *TUAM*, the Place of his *GRACE's* most usual Residence, being his own *Estate*, and in his own *Diocefs*. This having been some time designed, gives Life and Encouragement to all the rest, and will be the most influencing Example, not only to *CONNAUGHT*, but I hope to the whole *Kingdom*, over which his Grace now so deservedly presides, joyntly with so deserving a Colleague, under the happiest Administration of the best of Governments.

There is also a *Charity-School* going to be settled in the Parish of *Castleloft*, in the County of *WEST-MEATH*, where Twenty Four poor Boys will be cloathed, and taught to Read, Write, and Cast Accounts; and afterwards will be set out *Apprentices* to Trades at the Expence of certain Contributors, Subscriptions being already made to this Purpose.

There are likewise several other *Charity-Schools* soon expected; all which, when they are up, I intend to Publish; with the Names of all the *Benefactors* both of *them*, and of the rest above-mentioned, if I obtain their Leave. In the mean time, because I am called upon often for this Account, I must let these pass, for a Sample of that true *Charity* which God is putting into the Hearts of many, and which I hope his good Spirit will yet spread far and wide through this Nation.

The Method of the *Schools* is thus, each School contains *Twenty Four BOYS*; the Subscriptions for each are but *Thirty Shillings* a-piece per *Ann.* They are Clad with white Cloath, Vest, and Britches, and black Cloath Coat and Cap. every Eight Months; white *Stockings* and *Shoes* every Four Months. They have *Bands*, *Gloves*, *Shoe-Buckles* and *Garters* given them. All their *Books* and *Paper* are Bought for them. They are taken in from between *Seven* or *Eight*, to *Thirteen* or *Fourteen* Years Old, at *Sixteen* they are set *Apprentices* with *Three Pound* a-piece Portion. Three go out every Year; so that they are all out in *Eight Years*; and One is taken, immediately in, for every One that goes out; and thus the Number is still kept Compleat.

Note, That each School, at the above Allowance of but *Thirty Shillings* a *BOY*, can consist of neither more nor less than *Twenty Four Boys*. They cannot be less; because they can give but *Five Shillings* a-piece to the *School-Master* per *Ann.* (which being but *Six Pound* a Year) is the least he can spend his Time for. More they cannot be; because, then, the *Youngest* would not be put out in the *Eighth Year* at *Sixteen Year Old*; For there can be but *Three Portion'd* every Year; and that is the *Eighth Part* of *Twenty Four*; that so all may be

be out in Eight Years. Yet if the whole Number cou'd be made *Thirty Two*, then *Four* may be Portioned every Year: For stopping Yearly *Seven Shillings Six Pence* a-piece from *Eight Boys*, makes up a Portion for one Boy. This, with the *Master's Crown*, is *Twelve Shillings Six Pence*; and the remaining *Seventeen Shillings Six Pence* does all the rest. Now it's true, if *Four Boys* be Portion'd every Year, then *Thirty Two Boys* may be set off in the Eight Years; and so also the *Master* will have *Eight Pound* a Year for his Salary, which is indeed the best way in populous *Towns* or *Cities*.

As to the Method for Teaching, they are taught *Reading*, *Writing* and *Arithmetick* perfectly. Their *Masters* read short *Prayers* to them Twice every Day, with the Reading *Psalms*; and they read all the *Responses*, in every Part, as the *Clerks* do in the *CHURCH*. They Sing a *P S A L M* at every *Prayer* time, which they perform wonderfully well. They come duly to *Church*, in Order, every *SUNDAY*. They get by Heart, besides the *Church Catechism*, several other instructive *Books*, as the *Minister's* Discretion may direct them. Among which are, the *Preface of the Whole Duty of Man*, and the *Christian Monitor*, &c. Their *Morals* are chiefly taken Care of; and that they be duly Corrected for every ill Fault of the Tongue, or other Misdemeanors. I have found, by Experience, that they soon take to a great Devotion, and good Behaviour, being rightly look'd after.

We first chose poor *Orphans* to this School: Secondly those, who though they have *Fathers*, they are not able to bestow a *Penny* on their *Schooling* or *Cloathing*. And then, what Vacancies are left, after the poor Children of Protestants are taken in, we fill with poor Children of Papists. Poor Children cannot be wanting in any Place, for Two Miles round, at which distance they may come in the Morning after *Breakfast*, and go Home at Night to *Supper*. The Poorest of them have Friends that give them a little Food and a Shirt; but are not able to *School*, or *Cloath* them; but keep them Ragged, in Idleness, Barefooted and Barelegg'd, to depend on Thieving

in the Night, and Sleeping in the Day. As for Stroulers, that ramble a Begging, we take none of them: They are but few; and wou'd be fewer, if this Method took. Such as those, might easily be once Clad, and set an *Ship-board*, they wou'd make good *Sea-Men*. The Under-Tenants are generally so Poor, in this Kingdom, that even the half of the *Protestants* Children are in like want with those of the *Papists*. And I find that half of my Twenty-Four Boys, being *Papists* Children, they have already brought more than the like Number of their Parents and Friends to Church. For which Reason the Popish Priests do obstruct this Method, all they can. They have hindered several that moved for Admittance, by telling their Friends, the *Children* were to be Transported after a while; so that I was forced to offer a *Thousand Pound* Bond, that none shou'd be Transported from these Schools. But it's certain, if we Educated none but *Protestants* Children only, it wou'd put a greater stop to the Growth of Popery, than all the Acts of Parliament hitherto have done: For they still supply their *Mass-Houses*, even out of the poor, ignorant and debauched *Children* of the *Protestants*: And those are perhaps the greater Number of our *Children*; who must needs turn to them for want of both Education and Livelihood: For as their Writers say (*Ignorantia mater devotionis*) that Ignorance is the Mother of their Devotion; so Poverty and Thieving are, in our Country, the Nurse of it. The Boys that we Educate, tho' even the Children of *Papists*, being set to *Protestant* Masters, their Interest will never lie toward *Popery* any more.

I know some of the Benefactors in some of the *Schools* already up, who not being able to Maintain one *Boy*, have joyned with a Neighbour of like Ability, for half a *Boy* a-piece, and send in One between them. Each Subscriber chuses the *Boy* he Subscribes for. Such Superscription is but during Pleasure, and binds no Body longer then he finds he can Spare it. Yet I am Confident, when they are once up, God will not, probably, suffer them to fall again; but may stir up the Heart of some others to supply the Place of him that fails. Till
that

that happens, the other Benefactors may, in the mean while, divide so small a Failure between them Proportionably.

The Form of Subscription here follows.

W Hereas Prophaneness and Debauchery are greatly owing to a gross Ignorance of the Christian Religion (especially among the poorer Sort) and whereas nothing is more likely to promote the Practice of *Christianity* and *Virtue*, than an early and pious Education of *Youth*: And whereas many poor People are desirous of having their Children taught, but are not able to afford them a *Christian* and useful *Education*: We, whose Names are Under-Written, do hereby agree to pay Yearly, at Two equal Payments (during Pleasure) the several and respective Sums of Money over against our Names respectively subscribed, for setting up a *Charity-School* in the *Parish* of _____ and *Town* of _____ and *County* of _____ for teaching *poor Boys* to Read, Write, and Cast Accounts, and Instructing them in the Knowledge and Practice of the *Christian Religion*, as professed and taught in the *Church* of *ENGLAND*, and for their learning such other Things as are suitable to their Condition and Capacity (that is to say)

I *A. B.* do Subscribe for _____ poor Boys }
at the Rate of Thirty Shillings *per Ann.* each, the } o o o
Sum of _____ *per Ann.* _____ }
A. B.

All the Subscribers, may Subscribe thus to one Paper, one under another, writing each the Two last Lines as above.

I must here obviate one Objection, which I have heard from several good People, which is this—That in many Places we have but a bad Ministry: That in such Places the Children are not likely to come to such Perfection, in their Morals, as is proposed.

To this I Answer, That I hope those Places are not so many as is thought ; but how many soever they be, there is no *Minister* so bad, but the *Children* may be taught their *Catechism*, and con other good instructive Things, as above-mentioned. That Matter (if the *Minister* will not heed it) belongs to the Care of the *School-Master*, who shou'd be put in or out (with the *BISHOP's* Consent) by the Major Vote of the Subscribers, as their Allowances make the Majority of the School-Maintenance. And when founded on an Act of *PARLIAMENT*, then by the *Trustees* and Overseers in each *Barony*, who shou'd present the Master to the *BISHOP* for his *License*, which shou'd be given without *Fees*, and altered at Pleasure : So that the *School-Masters* will certainly be kept to their good Behaviour, and when the *Children* can read the *BIBLE* well (whereof every one will have one at going off) they will, there, soon learn their own *Duty* ; and the Seed sown in their *Schooling*, will spring up, sometime or other, more than can be easily believed. Besides going out to *Trades*, &c. may change their Abodes to, perhaps, a better *Ministry*. So that this Objection is of no force to hinder the Success of the Design in General.

Another Objection also I must speak a Word to, (*viz.*) that *Trades* wou'd not be found (as some think) for such a Number of *Boys* as *Two Thousand* Yearly put out. To this I Answer, *Trades* wou'd much encrease with them : The *Schools* themselves wou'd maintain (as I shall shew before I have done) some *Thousands* of *Trades-Men* ; and some, among themselves, might be fit to teach such *Schools*. Many (they all having *Arithmetick*) might be fit for *Navigation*. Gentlemen might be supplied with honest *Servants*, out of them, instead of such wicked debauched, and knavish *Youths* as they are often troubled with. And if any of them turned *Farmers*, or took to any other Occupation, they have *Three Pound* in hand to begin their Stock with. In short, when they are so soberly and virtuously Educated, throw them any way, as 'tis said of a *Cat*, they'll light on their Feet. And sure they will, in any
Condi-

Condition, the lowest that can happen to them, be much better Subjects, both to Church and State, than if left without *Education*, and without any *Portion*, at all. Either the *Minister* of the Place, or some other good *Christian*, willing to take the trouble to keep the *Accounts*, may receive all the *Subscriptions*, and be accountable for the Managing of it to the best Advantage. That *Thirty Shillings* a-piece, for each *BOY*, will be sufficient, for all the afore said Purposes, is demonstrated by the following Accounts.

The Accounts of one middling *Boy* of about *Twelve Years* Old. And *Note*, how much the bigger *Boys* take more, so much the smaller *Boys* take less.

	l.	s.	d.
Four Yards of ordinary Country <i>Frieze</i> , half Yard broad, colour'd Black, at <i>Ten Pence</i> per Yard, make the out <i>Coat</i> and <i>Cap</i> , with Buttons of the same.	0	3	4

Three Yards of white Country Market Cloath, half Yard broad, at <i>Seven Pence</i> per Yard, make the <i>Vest</i> and <i>Britches</i> , with Buttons of the same.	0	1	9
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Taylors Work <i>One Shilling</i> and <i>Three Pence</i> , <i>Canvas</i> and Thread <i>Tow Pence</i> , in all	0	1	5
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One Pair of Half-handed <i>Gloves</i> .	0	0	2
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Total,	0	6	8
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This serves <i>Eight Months</i> , in all	0	6	8
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The other Four Months is half of that	0	3	4
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Total Cloathing by the Year is,	0	10	0
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Three Pair of <i>Pumps</i> in the Year at <i>One Shilling</i> and a <i>Penny</i> a Pair	0	3	3
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Three Pair of <i>Stockings</i> , the Wool at <i>Five Pence</i> a Pair, and their Friends will Spin and Knit them.	0	1	3
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Two Bands Four Pence, Shoe-Buckles and Car-
ters Two Pence, in all ————

Books and Paper, per Ann. ————
Schooling, ————

The Portioning of Three Boys every Year, at
Three Pound a-piece, which is Nine Pound, is made
up by stopping Seven Shillings and Six Pence from
each Boy out of his Thirty Shillings. ————

For the Wages of a Steward, who goes about
to buy the Cloath, and attends the Milling and
Colouring it, and where there is not much of that
to do, as in greater Towns, he may be obliged to
attend their more noted Processions to Church, or
elsewhere; and bring up their Rear, keeping them
in Order and Rank, while their Master leads be-
fore them: He also may be a Monitor-morum, or
informer of Faults. ————

Total, 1 10 0

Note, The Black Coat must be but Knee deep, and no Ga-
thering or Pleats in the Side; but be cut strait down, and not
too wide. Also the Vest must be but a short Waste-Coat;
otherwise the stated Proportion of Cloath will not do, which
I still found to do, in my School, and in other Schools alrea-
dy up. The Cap takes half a Yard, and is made round with
a narrow Brim, somewhat like an *Undergraduate's* Cap in the
COLLEGE, but warmer and closer to the Head. The Cap
need not be made with every Suit: For one Cap will serve Two
Suits; so that Four Yards and a Quarter of Black Cloath may
be allowed, when the Cap is to be made, and Three Yards
and Three Quarters the next time, without the Cap, that is,
Eight Yards between both times, which is one with another
Four Yards a time, as is above reckoned.

Some

Some may think this too Scanty an Allowance, they may mend it if they Please, where they find People willing: So they do not thereby abridge, or diminish the proposed Number of Schools: For I think our pompous *Charities* and magnificent *Buildings*, that leave such *Charity* as this undone, are great Errors. The Education of *Boys* in *Christian Knowledge*, and then setting them out with a little *Portion*, to work for their Living, is the chief and only necessary Thing. The poor Children, who were used to Nakedness and Cold, will be highly encouraged with thus much Cloathing. And perhaps more would but nurse Pride, and mar their native Humility. Our *KINGDOM* is but Poor, and the Poorest of it can be maintain'd but Poorly: 'Tis no matter how Poorly, so it suffice to support their Life, and give them Instruction in *Christian Knowledge*, with *Schooling* and *Portions* to live by hereafter. I must yet further offer that there would, perhaps, be no need of giving any of the *Boys* double Allowance, as before was spoken of: For Schools might be placed in any part of the *Country*, where the *Boys* do Live, tho' no Town be there. Because no Boys will be fit to set out the very first Year, the Nine Pound Portions for that Year, may build them a *School-House*. Care must be taken to let the Three youngest *Boys* be but *Seven Year Old*: Because 'twill be Nine Years before it cometh to their Turns to go out. By thus doing, the value of a Half-penny an Acre, on the Land Rent, or what is Equivalent, Four Pence per Pound (which is but a Sixtieth Part) will do the Work: Who would be-grudge that? The whole Number of Acres is———*Ten Millions Eight Hundred Sixty Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Forty Nine ACRES*: So many Half-pence would be, in all,———*Twenty Two Thousand Six Hundred Forty Three POUNDS Twelve SHILLINGS and Ten PENCE*. *Twenty Four Thousand POUNDS* would give *Sixteen Thousand BOYS Thirty Shillings* a-piece. So there wants but *One Thousand Three Hundred Fifty Six POUND Seven SHILLINGS and Two PENCE*, which is but the Maintenance of *Nine Hundred and Four BOYS*. How easily may that

be divided between Trades, Employments, Stock and Tythe : It wou'd not come, in all likelihood, to *Two Pence per Pound* on those, tho' you excluded all who were under Twenty Pound a Year.

I shall hint at one little Argument more, to recommend this Design, which is so very easy to the Publick, (which may perhaps go deeper with some, than the bare Obligations to Charity, tho' even to the Charitable also, it may be a good further Motive,) viz. the great Good this will do, even, to our *Manufacturies* and *Trade*. There will be thus consumed, by the Number of *Schools* proposed, at least *Two Thousand Pound* worth of our *LEATHER* Yearly ; and *Six Thousand Pound* worth of our *COUNTRY CLOATH* ; and *One Thousand Two Hundred Pound* in *BOOKS* ; and all the whole *Money* circulate within our selves. There wou'd be also a multitude of *poor Families*, besides the *Scholars*, put into a constant way to Live by this : For the *Schools*, at *Twenty Four Boys* each, wou'd make *Six Hundred Sixty Seven SCHOOLS*. Now every *School* wou'd maintain *Four Families*, that is, a *Shoe-Maker*, a *Taylor*, a *School-Master*, and a *Steward* ; which wou'd be *Two Thousand Six Hundred Sixty Eight* poor Families. I know the *Shoe-Makers* and *Tailors*, of those *Schools* already up, who cou'd scarce get Bread to Live by, but as meer Beggars, till they got this Work ; which being a Yearly Certainty, it helps them to Live tolerably well, by employing their vacant Time, when they have not other Work. So that this will be one great Advantage also to the Nation.

Fourthly, I shall now Conclude, as I promised, with Her Sacred Majesties most Gracious Letter.

Her

Her MAJESTY'S

LETTER

TO THE

Arch-Bishop of Canterbury.

To the most Reverend Father in God, Our Right Trusty and Right Entirely Beloved Chancellor, Thomas Lord Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England and Metropolitan.

ANNE R.

MOST Reverend Father in God, Our Right Trusty and Right Entirely Beloved Councellor, We greet you well: Altho' from the Beginning of our Reign, Our earnest Desire hath been to Employ the Authority given Us by Almighty God, in Maintaining the Purity and Power of His Holy Religion, and in Repressing all such Doctrines and Practices as are contrary thereunto; yet, to Our exceeding Grief, We have understood, not only that Looseness and Corruption of Manners, and a Neglect of all wholesome Discipline, have of late greatly prevailed in this Our Kingdom; but also, that uncommon Industry hath been used by Menaverse to all Religion and Goodness, and, as We have just Ground to believe, Ill-affected towards Our State, in Venting and Spreading such Principles as tend to Undermine the Christian Faith, to Overthrow all Vertue and Order among Men, and to Dissolve the Bands of Civil Government.

Wherefore Our Will and Pleasure is, and We do by these Letters strictly Charge and Require you, as you will Answer it to Him, by whom both we and you are to be Judged, That you be Assisting to Us, in putting a timely Stop to the further Growth of Infidelity and Prophaneness, and in Promoting and Encouraging Piety among Our Subjects, by such Means as you shall Judge to be most Effectual for these Purposes, and particularly by Enforcing, as far as in you lies, a due Observation of all such Ecclesiastical Laws and Canons as have been hitherto provided for the Well-governing of the Church, and the Furtherance of Godly Living.

To this End, We do likewise Enjoyn and Require you to Exhort the Clergy of your Diocese to watch diligently over their Flocks, to be Exemplary in their Lives, to frame their Publick Discourses to the People upon such Subjects as tend most to Edification, and particularly to be very careful and constant in Catechizing those of the younger Sort, and in preparing them, as soon as they come to a fit Age, for Confirmation, and the worthy Receiving of the Holy Communion: And if any of the Clergy under your Care shall be found Negligent and Remiss in Discharging these or any other Duties of their Sacred Calling, or shall, by a disorderly Conversation, or by any Behaviour unbecoming their Holy Function, lessen the good Effects of their Ministry; We Command, That by Admonition, Censure, or otherwise, as the Case shall deserve, you endeavour to Reform all such Neglects and Abuses, and by that means Repress the Scandal and Mischief which the Church of God might suffer thereby.

And forasmuch as the Pious Instruction and Education of Children, is the surest way of preserving and propagating the Knowledge and Practice of true Religion; it hath been very Acceptable to Us to hear, that for the Attaining these good Ends, many *Charity-Schools* are now Erected throughout this Kingdom, by the liberal Contributions of Our good Subjects; We do therefore earnestly Recommend it to you, by all proper Ways, to Encourage and Promote so Excellent a Work, and

and to Countenance and Assist the Persons Principally concern'd in it, as they shall always be sure of Our Protection and Favour.

We hope, and We expect it from you, That as often as you are required thereunto by Law, and are not let and hindered by some just and reasonable Cause, you will Visit your Diocese in Person; by which means you will be more fully and certainly Informed of all such Matters belonging to your Charge, as may want your Direction and Redress, or may be fit for Our Royal Cognizance and Interposition, if need shall so require: And We Will, That at all Times, as well as at your usual Visitations, you lay hold of all Opportunities to Confirm such as are duly qualified.

We do moreover think proper to Recommend to you, That before the next Sitting of Convocation, you would carefully Consider what Defects there are in the present Discipline of the Church, and what further Provision may be requisite towards removing them, that when the Convocation Assembles, such Orders and Constitutions, as are wanting, may, upon due Deliberation, be Prepared and Laid before Us for Our Consent; which We shall always readily Impart to whatever We shall Judge may Conduce to the Honour of God, the Advancement of True Religion, and the Welfare of the Establish'd Church: These being the great Ends which We have most at Heart, and by the Promoting of which We chiefly Promise Our selves the Blessing of God upon Us and Our People.

Our Will is, That you forthwith Transmit Copies of these Our Letters to all the Suffragans of your Province: And so not Doubting of your and their Dutiful and Ready Concurrence with Us in these Our Royal Purposes, We bid you heartily Farewel.

Given at Our Castle of Windsor, the Twentieth Day of August, 1711, in the Tenth Year of Our Reign,

By Her Majesties Command,

DARTMOUTH.

This

This Letter being only for *England*, what might we expect from so Pious a Sovereign, if Her MAJESTY knew the utmost Extremity of the Condition of Her poor Subjects *Children* in *IRELAND*.

I know not how it is possible for any *Christian*, that pretends to Love Christ, to Love him at all in Earnest, unless they Love his Body, (his Mystical Body,) which is made up chiefly, of his poor *Christians*, who are far, in Number, more than the richer Ones. And those, who are Innocent of them, have the truest Claim to him, and are the truest Examples of his Humility, and lowliness, and voidness of Interest in this World, and the Mammon of it. Can we say we Love Christ, and Love not them? And can we Love them without relieving them, at least with a *Jewish* Measure of *Alms*?

The greatest (and only) Objection we have, against most of those who wou'd appear Objects for our *Alms*, is—that we know not but that they are *Naughty*, *Cheats*, *Rogues*, *Thieves*, or drunken debauched *Wretches*. But we scape all this Danger by fixing on the *poor Children*: We are sure of their Innocence, if we thus Relieve them in time. How can any Christian Heart behold such Number of Christ's poor innocent Children (as may be met with in all Places of this Land, where we are Subjects, and where we are so Plentifully provided for) and see them Naked, Cold, Starving and Un-*taught*; not only, as *Sheep without a Shepherd*, but as *Lambs* in the *Wolf's Mouth*? Can any Christian Heart, I say, behold these lamentable Spectacles, daily, without melting into the Bowels of Compassion, and Striving to give some Help? That Heart which can harden it self against this Sight, *Christ* dwelleth not in it. How dwelleth the Love of God in him? *He that shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion from these, how dwelleth the Love of God in him*, 1 John 3. 17. if we will, even, in the Bowels of our own Nation, in our own *Precincts*, see so many Innocents perish for lack of Knowledge, which we cou'd so easily remedy, how can we ever hope to see any Good? Or why shou'd we have Eyes at all?

In short, if we do not, some way, provide for the Instruction, and Livelihood of the *poor Children* of IRELAND, but force them to turn Thieves; if we will not have so much value for the safety of our established *Constitution*, both in CHURCH and STATE, and which is worse, if we will not have so much regard to our SAVIOUR's Precepts, as to lay up (at least) so much of our Treasure in Heaven, as wou'd give some Safety to the rest we have here on Earth (that such Multitudes of *Thieves*, as these wou'd be, may not *break through and Steal*;) and in one Word, if all the Commands of *Scripture*, will not move us to so small, and so absolutely necessary a CHARITY as *this*, I have no more to say to it; but one dreadful Prognostick (which I am Positive in) from our Saviour's own Admonition, in the very last Words of his SERMON on the Mount, *Matth. 7. 27*. That we are but *building our House on the Sand*, and in a little time more it will *fall*, and *great will be the fall* of it. The Lord prevent it by granting us to see, and know, and do in these our Days, the Things that belong to our Peace.

I have now but a Word of Request, which I humbly offer to my Brethren of the CLERGY, who are the Ministers of all the *Parishes* in this KINGDOM.

Reverend Brethren,

I Am satisfied I need say but little to you, who know better Things than I can tell you; the Lord make every one of us as willing as knowing, which I fear some are not; but I hope those are few. I hope none will count this a Presumption in me, who am now in the Seventieth Year of my Age, to give my dying Advice to those that are to Survive me on this Earthly Stage; that they wou'd Act with Zeal, and not with Indifferency, that Part which God has call'd them to. My dear Brethren, you, who in your several Places respectively, are intrusted with the Care of the SOULS of all those poor LAMBS of *Christ*, which I here Plead for; and yet cannot discharge that Duty, unless their Neighbours will enable their Bodies to

attend your Instruction: For the Lord Jesus Christ his sake use your utmost Interest and Endeavours to press this *Charity* to all those, who are able, in your *Cures*. There are none, who have Twenty Pound a Year to Live on, but may Contribute something; and if a *School* cannot be set up in your own *Cures*, joyn with your *Neighbour Cures*: 'Tis as acceptable to GOD wherever the Thing be done. Let us not easily take common Excuses, or unchristian Denials. Let us Preach incessantly this Duty of *Charity*; till we make them know, that without it they are no Christians, nor have any true ground to look for Acceptance with *Christ*, at the last Day. Now when the poor innocent helpless *Children of Christ* are grown so Numerous, and Swarming daily, more and more, now or never we shou'd look to it, and Postpone all other *Charities* to this: For what else in the World can be so necessary? So small a Matter will do this, as wou'd be very little, or no hinderance to any other *Charity*, or honest Design whatsoever. Our Families will Prosper the better; he that does not believe that, believes no *Providence* nor *Scripture*, and is little better than an *ATHEIST*, or *DEIST*, whatever he pretends. Even a Deist might see, that neither he nor his Family can Prosper, if the Nation in general fall to Destruction, or be Improsperous; which it must, if every one (that has as much reason to save his *Money*, and to deny *Charity* as he has) wou'd refuse this Duty, as he does. Let us at last, if nothing else will do, mark that Man, so that all the World may see and know him, who is so desperate a *Mammonist*, that neither the Safety of his Country, nor Christian Bowels will prevail on him to follow the Instruction, or Example of *Christ's Ministers*, in behalf of God's poor *Christian Children*. Let us be resolute in this, and not fear what *Man* can do unto us: For by thus doing our Duty, and contributing our own Proportion, we shall be acceptable to God, and approved of Men.

Far be it from me, that I should (which I know some Scoffers will be apt to say) take upon me to Tutor my Betters. But I only beg for the *Lord's* sake, that ye will support and assist

assist my poor Endeavours in this Recommendation of these *Charity-Schools* to the NATION: For without your Concurrence, I know it can signify nothing. It depends, under God, upon your helping Hands, when our Superiors, the *Most Reverend*, and *Right Reverend BISHOPS*, shall think fit, and please to Encourage you in it: Which I am sure they wou'd have long since done, if they had thought it feasible, or had known (what I have here demonstrated) how small a Thing will do it. The Lord grant the Success of it, for his Mercy sake.

SINCE the Printing the former Sheets, we have receiv'd an Account of a *Charity-School*, which was founded at *WATERFORD*, by the Right Reverend Dr. *Nathaniel Foy*, late *Lord Bishop* of that *CITY*; where there is now a *School* built, and by his Will Fifty *poor Children* are to be taught *Reading, Writing* and *Arithmetick*. There is an Allowance of Forty Pound *per Ann.* to the *School-Master*, and Ten Pound to a *Catechist*. The *Salary* of each, and the Number of the *Boys*, are to increase in Proportion as the *Fund* (part of which is in Reversion) comes into the Hands of the *TRUSTEES*. It's thought the whole Fund, for this Use, will amount to, between, Four and Five Thousand Pounds. Besides this, he left above Five Hundred Pounds for the putting some of the *Children*, of this *School*, Apprentices, to *Masters* of the Establish'd Church.

F I N I S.

B O O K S Published by the same Author.

A Conference between the Soul and the Body, concerning the present and future State: Shewing how different the general Practice of Religion now is from that of the first Christians. London printed by J. Downing, for Richard Smith.

An Answer to Mr. *Asgill's* Book, about his Translation to Heaven without Death, &c. upon occasion of which, the true Nature of Saving Faith, the true Gospel Repentance, and the Soul's Immortality (all by him Ignorantly abused, and too often by many others) are plainly stated and clear'd. Dublin printed.

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An Answer to the Apology of Mr. *Sam. Henry*, (who stiles himself) Dissenting Minister at *Sligo*. Dublin printed by A. Rhames.

A Method of Charity-Schools, recommended for giving a Religious Education, and way of Livelihood to the poor Children in *Ireland*, &c. Dublin printed by A.

P O S T S C R I P T.

I Have thought fit to add this little *Remark* concerning the *Subscribers* to the *Charity-Schools*: That whereas I find several do chuse *Boys*, for Favour or Affection, among their own Dependants, who are not near so great Objects of *Charity*, as many others whom they Neglect and Refuse: It shou'd, therefore, be a *Rule* that the Excellency of Votes of *Subscribers* (according as their Subscriptions make the Majority of the School-Maintenance) shou'd Reject such as they think not so proper Objects of *Charity*, and order that the said *PATRON*, who chuses such, shou'd chuse again, amongst those that are fit Objects; or otherwise if he do not, that they shou'd chuse One for him.

And also it wou'd be well, if in *DUBLIN* or great *CITIES*, they made each *School* Thirty Two *BOYS*, and each *Subscriber* to give the rate of *Forty Shillings* a Boy, which is but proportionable to *Thirty Shillings* in the Country, and then each Boy may give the *Master* Eight Shillings a Year. And some of the Charitable *Benefactors*, or the *Minister* of the Place, may save the Charges of *Steward*: So that each Boy may give Four or Five Half-Crowns towards their Portions instead of the Seven Shillings and Six-pence mention'd in the other Scheme for the Country: And so there wou'd, therefore, be Four *Boys* set out every Year at Four or Five Pound a-piece Portion: For every *Half-Crown* makes a *Pound* Portion. Then at the highest Portion of Five Pound each, there wou'd afterward be left to each Boy Three Shillings and Nine-pence more than in the *Country Scheme* to be added to their *Cloathing* and *Shooing per Annum*, which I think wou'd then be sufficient.

And I am perswaded (where the Circumstances of the respective Places will afford it) to chuse at least half the Number of each *School* among such *Children* as are of *POPISH Parents*, wou'd turn to the best Account for the main Design of this most Excellent *Charity*.

POSTSCRIPT

I Have thought fit to add this little Remark concerning the Subscribers to the Charity-Schools: That whereas I find several do chuse Boys, for Favour or Affection, among their own Dependants, who are not near so great Objects of Charity, as many others whom they Neglect and Retale: It should, therefore, be a Rule that the Excellency of Voices of Subscribers (according as their Subscriptions make the Majority of the School-Maintenance) should Reject such as they think not to proper Objects of Charity, and order that the said PATRON, who chuses such, should chuse again, amongst those that are fit Objects; or otherwise if he do not, that they should chuse One for him.

And also it would be well, if in DUBLIN or great CITIES, they made each School Thirty Two BOYS, and each Subscriber to give the rate of Forty Shillings a Boy, which is but proportionable to Thirty Shillings in the Country; and then each Boy may give the Master Eight Shillings a Year. And some of the Charitable Benefactors, or the Minister of the Place, may have the Charges of Stewards: So that each Boy may give Four or Five Half-Crowns towards their Portions instead of the seven Shillings and Six pence mentioned in the other Scheme for the Country: And so it would, therefore, be Four Boys for our every Year at Four or Five Shillings a piece: For every Boy Crown makes a Pound Portion. Then at the highest Portion of Five Pound each, there would afterward be left to each Boy Three Shillings and Nine pence more than in the Country: And so it would be added to their Clothing and Schooling for the Year: I think would then be sufficient. And I am persuaded (where the Circumstances of the respective Places will afford it) to chuse at least half the Number of each School among such Children as are of POORER Families, would turn to the best Account for the main Design of such an Excellent Charity.

